

# **IOWA BIRD LIFE**

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**IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION**



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## IOWA BIRD LIFE

*The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.*

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# Iowa Ornithologists' Union Honorary Member—Ann Johnson

*Stephen J. Dinsmore and James J. Dinsmore*



*Ann M. Johnson*

At the spring 2008 business meeting in Oskaaloosa, members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union voted to award Honorary Membership to Ann M. Johnson. This recognition, the highest honor that the IOU can give to one of its members, is based on long-standing contributions to the organization and its objectives and requires a three-fourth vote of members at the spring meeting.

Ann Johnson has made many contributions to the IOU since she joined the

organization in 1961. She has served on both the Membership Committee (1991–1996) and the Publications Committee (2003–present, committee chair 2004–present). She has been a fixture on the Records Committee, serving as a member from 1993–1999 and then as secretary since 2000. The secretary is the person who does much of the committee's work by keeping track of records as they are submitted, monitoring the review of those records, and writing the annual report. By putting all records onto a website that is accessible to committee members, Ann has made huge changes in the review process. Records are now reviewed much more rapidly, and those who submit records are getting rapid feedback.

Ann is perhaps best known for her work with the award-winning IOU website. She designed the original website, has revised it numerous times, and has added an innovative tool whereby members can submit observations for the seasonal field reports. More recently, Ann has developed websites for the Iowa Important Bird Areas program and for the Iowa Breeding Bird Atlas, both of which allow individuals to enter data directly into a database. Both sites are linked to the IOU website. With its numerous links to birding areas, photos of rare birds, and reports of recent sightings, the website has become the way that many IOU members keep up with birding in Iowa.

Ann has cheerfully and generously donated hundreds of hours to these and other

projects, thereby modernizing data collection by the Iowa Ornithologists' Union, and, in the process, has put the Iowa Ornithologists' Union at the forefront of state birding organizations in making use of modern technology to help achieve their goals. Because of her devotion to the IOU, she now spends much of her time birding through a computer screen although she still finds time for the occasional field trip. The day after she received IOU Honorary Membership, she learned that a hacker had damaged the website. It took her many hours to repair the website and get it running again, typical of her devotion. We are fortunate to have her as a member of our organization and pleased that we can recognize her contributions through Honorary Membership.

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## Field Reports—Spring 2008

*Matthew C. Kenne*



*Matthew C. Kenne*

### WEATHER

In general, the spring season continued what the previous winter had started: cold and wet. Fleeting warmth as March began was quickly snuffed out by sub-zero temperatures, and above average temps didn't return until mid-April. Cooler than normal conditions kept the substantial northern snowpack from creating extensive flooding in March, although frequent light snows and rains kept the state saturated and made rural driving difficult, especially in the south. A rain/snow system 10–11 Apr caused a notable fallout over north-central areas of early migrants including Hermit Thrushes and Fox Sparrows, and dropped over an inch of rain across Iowa. East and West Okoboji and Spirit Lake remained mostly ice-covered 13 April (Steve Dinsmore, pers obs), but a warming trend starting the 15th finally

completed ice-out. The increase in temps also brought an increase in widespread rainfall, with storms 17–18 and 23–25 April again pounding central and northeast Iowa. The latter storm brought with it a fallout of shorebirds to flooded agricultural fields and a sharp drop in temperatures, including snow the 28th and an almost state-wide freeze the 29th. May remained cool, with Spencer reporting the state's last freeze the morning of the 21st, but a mid-month dry spell allowed farmers to attempt planting. The temperatures finally climbed in late May, reaching 91 degrees at Shenandoah on the 25th, but severe weather across the southeastern 2/3rds of the state that same day brought with it an F5 tornado through Parkersburg, New Hartford, and Butler and Black Hawk Counties. Heavy rains again fell across central and northeast Iowa 29–30 May, averaging two inches statewide and causing widespread flooding. The 2008 spring season ranks as the 31st coldest and 12th wettest among 136 years of records, and State Climatologist Harry Hillaker's outlook at the end of May included this foreboding statement: "The current short-term forecast does not look favorable for drier than normal weather."

#### HABITAT, GENERAL TRENDS

Water birds (with the exception of rare gulls) seemed drawn to Iowa's soggy conditions this spring, with waterfowl lounging in flooded farm fields; and Least Bitterns, White-faced Ibis, Black-crowned Night-Herons, and Cattle Egrets being found in higher than usual numbers. Shorebirds also took advantage of spring flooding, and it's interesting to note the differences in flock composition between shorebirds using sheet-water pools 27 April in Greene and Guthrie counties as noted by Steve Dinsmore and Jay Gilliam, and those of a 2005 survey taken in mid-May (Kenne 2006). The magnitude of the fallout was impressive—Steve and Jay recorded the largest gathering of spring Lesser Yellowlegs and Long-billed Dowitchers since 2005. The other shorebird hot spot this spring, Diamond Lake in Dickinson Co., was the result of the opposite water conditions: DNR efforts to drain the lake for habitat restoration.

Among land birds, the repeated rain systems kept migration slowly plodding along. Reports in mid-April indicated substantial grounding of migrants. Referring to abundant Hermit Thrushes, Lee Schoenewe said, "It was certainly as much of a peak in spring numbers as I have seen in many years." Several peak waterfowl and loon assemblies were also attributable to poor April migrating conditions. The comments continued through May about the abundance of *Empidonax* flycatchers and *Catharus* thrushes. Rita Goranson's observation summed up those of several birders this spring: "I honestly don't think that I have ever seen this many thrushes push through the area before."

Warblers were a source of enjoyment instead of frustration for birders in western Iowa this spring, as they reported numbers and variety much higher than usual. Paul Roisen reported, "33 warbler species seen in Woodbury in 2008. Old timers say this is probably the best season ever. Of regular species only Cerulean, Black-throated Blue, and strangely Yellow-breasted Chat not seen"; and John Van Dyk of Sioux Center said, "Excellent migration, especially during the last week of May. In all I observed 15 warbler species in our yard alone." Migrating warblers and other insectivores that reached Iowa in late April and early May surely suffered from a smaller prey base, as cold weather delayed leaf-out, hurt flowering, and hindered the arrival and hatching of insects. A slowed progression of migra-

tion was noted by some birders, and detectable among the late dates provided. While not record late, the numbers of vireos, thrushes, and warblers still passing through the last few days of May was remarkable.

Another bird "group," winter feeder birds, provided lingerers as well, although whether the phenomenon was due to weather or other influences is unknown. Red-breasted Nuthatches, Red Crossbills, and Pine Siskins remained across Iowa through the period, and it will be interesting to see if nesting evidence comes forth for these opportunistic breeders in the summer 2008 field reports.

## UNUSUAL SPECIES

Accidental and Casual species that were reviewed by the Records Committee included Iowa's first Scott's Oriole in Emmet County, the fourth Neotropic Cormorant, Glossy Ibis, Whimbrel, the famous Story County Painted Bunting, Lazuli Bunting, and four White-winged Doves, a species that will achieve Regular (but rare) status at the next committee meeting. These birds were all photographed, while written descriptions were submitted for Eurasian Wigeon, Prairie Warbler, another Lazuli Bunting, and White-winged Dove. Other good finds included Red-throated and Pacific Loons, Black-necked Stilts, Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Snowy Owl, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, Brewster's Warbler, Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler, numerous Connecticut Warblers, wandering Summer Tanagers, Smith's Longpurs at new locations, and Red Crossbills.

## SPECIES DATA

All CAPS = Casual or Accidental species. \* = documented. County names are in italics. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used: **A** = area, **Cr** = Creek, **Isl** = island, **L** = lake, **L&D** = lock and dam, **M** = marsh, **m.ob.** = many observers, **NA** = nature area, **NWR** = national wildlife refuge, **P** = park, **Pr** = prairie, **R** = river, **RA** = recreation area, **Res** = reservoir, **SF** = state forest, **Sl** = slough, **SP** = state park, **USNWR** = Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, **WCCB** = Winnebago County Conservation Board, **WPA** = waterfowl production area, **WA** = wildlife area.

**Greater White-fronted Goose:** The recent pattern continues: flocks numbering in the thousands were along the southern border 1 Mar, passed through western and central Iowa in Mar, and were reported in northern Iowa the first two weeks of Apr. The peak in eastern Iowa: 230 on 16 Mar

at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CRE) and 150 on 20 Mar at Big M *Butler* (DK). There were no reports between 570 on 13 Apr at Virgin L *Palo Alto* (SJD) and the last 2 on 17 May at Dan Green Sl *Clay* (LAS).

**Snow Goose:** Flocks of 100,000 were counted 1 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 12 Mar at Snyder's Bend *Woodbury* (GLV), while more than 10,000 were reported in early Mar from *Decatur*, *Page*, and *Warren* (NJM, KDy, AB). The largest flocks elsewhere were 112 on 11 Apr at Long Pond *Guthrie* (DTh) and 200 on 12 Apr *Kossuth* (AB), and they were found as far east as Cone M *Louisa* (DP). The final of three May singles was 26 May at Black Hawk L *Sac* (MTh).

**Ross's Goose:** An echo of Snow Goose: 1,000–1,500 *Page* in early Mar (KDy); 22–46 *Ringgold*, *Appanoose*, and *Warren* in Mar (JG, RLC, AB); and a few mid-state Apr reports dwindling to the last single 11 May at Lakin Sl *Guthrie* (JG, SJD).

**Cackling Goose:** Seventy returned by 1 Mar to L Rathbun *Appanoose* (JG). Smaller numbers were reported from the western 2/3rds of the state throughout Mar. Last and most: 250 on 12 Apr *Kossuth* (AB, JG) and 184 on 13 Apr at Virgin L *Palo Alto* (SJD) left shortly thereafter on improving weather.

**Canada Goose:** Aaron Brees observed five flocks totaling 143 migrants flying north over Stephens SF *Lucas* 29 May. Young non/failed breeders migrate north to molt away from crowds of hungry local family groups.

**Mute Swan:** An adult 6 Apr *Grundy* caught Mark Proescholdt's attention.

**Trumpeter Swan:** Thirty two remained at Beemers' Pond *Hamilton* 9 Mar (SJD), and up to 14 were reported from thirteen additional counties.

**Tundra Swan:** All: one that overwintered at Beemer's Pond *Hamilton* was still present 9 Mar (SJD), a single at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* 26 Mar (DC), and 2 on 26 Mar *Marshall* (MPR).

**Wood Duck:** The first 12 on 2 Mar *Decatur* enjoyed an early warm spell (NJM).

**Gadwall:** First: 164 on 2 Mar at L Icaria *Adams* (JG). Most: 980 on 13 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SJD). A pair were potential nesters at Harrier M *Boone* 31 May (LGD).

**EURASIAN WIGEON:** A drake was at Swan L *Johnson* 14 Apr (\*JLF).

**American Wigeon:** First: 2 Mar *Woodbury*, *Adams*, and *Union* (TLu, JG). Most: 110 on 12 Apr *Fremont* (KDY) and 109 on 13 Apr *Pocahontas* (SJD). Fifteen on 3 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* were a surprisingly early last report (CJC).

**American Black Duck:** One or two were reported from six locations, the last 2 at Hendrickson M *Story* 2 Apr (MPR).

**Blue-winged Teal:** First: 3 on 11 Mar

both *Fremont* and *Decatur* (KDY, NJM). Most: 1125 on 27 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (BE).

**Cinnamon Teal:** All: 22–25 Mar at River-ton WA *Fremont* (KDY), 13 Apr at Polk City WA *Polk* (PE, JB, PW), 25 Apr at Port Louisa NWR *Louisa* (CF), 27 Apr at River-ton WA (KDY), a CITE x BWTE hybrid 30 Apr at Colo Ponds *Story* (MPR), and 18 May *Fremont* (KDY).

**Northern Shoveler:** First: 12 on 12 Mar *Decatur* (NJM). Most: 380 on 13 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SJD).

**Northern Pintail:** First: 14 on 1 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), followed by *Adams*, *Union*, and *Woodbury* 2 Mar (JG, TLu). Hundreds were reported mid-Mar from the the central, southcentral, and southwest, but subsequently only singles or pairs were noted. Last was a pair 17 May at Diamond L *Dickinson* and a lone drake 18 May at Cumming Wetlands *Warren* (both JG).

**Green-winged Teal:** Most: 400 on 11 Apr at Farragut *Fremont* (KDY). A drake 24 May *Tama* was the last (SJD).

**Canvasback:** The first away from the Mississippi R: 125–285 on 15 Mar *Page*, *Polk*, *Dallas*, *Appanoose*, and *Greene* (KDY, JG, RLS, JGD). Most: 350 on 5 Apr *Greene* (JG). There were still 8 pairs lingering at Colo Ponds *Story* 30 May (HZ).

**Redhead:** Most: 73 on 16 Mar at Green Valley L *Union* (JG).

**Ring-necked Duck:** Most: 483 on 13 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SJD).

**Greater Scaup:** Large flocks were found 20 on 1 Mar at the Mississippi R *Scott* (CJC, CRE), 35 on 29 Mar at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (PH), and approx. 50 on 29 Mar above Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (KVS). Elsewhere, groups of up to 10 were reported from across the western 2/3rds of the state, with the last single 19 Apr at Waterworks P *Polk* (AB).

**Lesser Scaup:** Peak numbers were reported from the eastern 1/2 of the state: 5,735 on 22 Mar at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (JG), 6,700 on 26 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB), and 8,200 on 29 Mar at the Mississippi R *Clinton* (JG). One lingered as far south as Swan L SP *Carroll* 28 May (MTW).

**Surf Scoter:** All: 28–30 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (DR, SMF), 18 Apr at Waterworks P *Polk* (RIA, PHA), 30 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (Elliot Bedows), 3 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), and 10 May at Jewel *Hamilton* (WO).

**White-winged Scoter:** All: 29 Mar and 9 Apr at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (RLC, DT), and 30 Mar at both Cedar L *Chickasaw* (PH) and L&D 14 *Scott* (SMF).

**Long-tailed Duck:** All: 2 on 3 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (SMF), 29 Mar at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (RLC), 29 Mar at Credit Isl *Scott* (JG), 19 Apr at Yellow Smoke P *Crawford* (RIA, PHA), and 21–23 Apr at Swan L SP *Carroll* (MTW).

**Bufflehead:** First: 3 on 2 Mar at L Icaria *Adams* (JG). Most: 147 on 13 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SJD) were waiting for the weather to improve. Last: 26 May at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR) and 31 May at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (CJF).

**Common Goldeneye:** Most: 200 on 1 Mar at the Mississippi R *Scott* (CJC). Inland, 106 were at Saylorville Res *Polk* 6 Mar (SJD) and 110 were at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* 29 Mar (PH). The last was a hen 23–28 May at Swan L SP *Carroll* (MTW).

**Hooded Merganser:** Broods were reported in the south 17 May *Fremont* (KDy) and 23 May *Polk* (DTh).

**Common Merganser:** Most: 400 on 15 Mar at Runnells WA *Polk* (JG). On 25 Mar, 207 were at Hallett's Quarry *Polk* and 170 were at L Colchester *Warren* (both JG). Last: a hen 12 Apr at Maffitt Res *Dallas* (JG)

and a late straggler 27 May at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (TLu).

**Red-breasted Merganser:** First: 2 on 2 Mar at L Icaria *Adams* (JG). Most: 290 on 3 Apr at L Colchester *Warren* (JG). One swimming in a flooded field *Johnson* 3 May was perhaps a bad omen (BSc). The last was a hen 15 May at Maffitt Res *Polk* (JG).

**Ruddy Duck:** First: 2 on 16 Mar at Credit Isl *Scott* (DR) and 10 on 16 Mar at L Icaria *Adams* (JG). Most: 288 on 9 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JG) and 486 on 22 Apr at Diamond L *Dickinson* (ETH). Four pairs were still at Colo Ponds *Story* 30 May and 4 were at Harrier M *Boone* 31 May (LGD).

**Gray Partridge:** Perhaps an indication of a downward turn: neither John Van Dyk *Sioux* or I Kossuth saw a partridge this season, and Rita Goranson finally had her first of the year 29 May *Cerro Gordo*.

**Ruffed Grouse:** All: 18 Apr at Stephens SF *Lucas* (AB), 3 on 17 May at Yellow R SF *Allamakee* (KVS), and 31 May at Jakway F *Buchanan* (DAK).

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** All reports were of ~10 birds from the Kellerton BCA lek area *Ringgold* (JG, POR, DTh, WO, KDy).

**Northern Bobwhite:** The winter season was apparently hard on bobwhite populations. From 1–8 were reported from only *Appanoose*, *Jefferson*, *Woodbury*, *Boone*, and *Decatur*, where Jeff Livingston found dramatically lower numbers than in previous years.

**Red-throated Loon:** One imm at Maffitt Res *Dallas* 4 May (JG- photo) was joined by a second the next day (DAK).

**Pacific Loon:** An imm visited Amana L *Iowa* 14 Apr (\*JLF).

**Common Loon:** First: 23 Mar at Rapp P *Page* (KDy), followed by 26 Mar at both N Raccoon WA *Dallas* (TL) and Gray's L *Polk* (JB). Most: 18 on 12 Apr at Maffitt Res *Dal-*



*las* (JG) and 19 on 13 Apr at Lost Island L *Palo Alto* (SJD). Reports from other locations were of 1–6 birds. Last, both 31 May: single 1st-year birds at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and Clear L *Cerro Gordo* (CJF, RGo).

**Pied-billed Grebe:** First: 2 Mar at L *Icaria Adams* (JG), followed by 15 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY).

**Horned Grebe:** First: 3 on 23 Mar at Cedar L *Linn* (BSc). Peak numbers were found at L Rathbun *Appanoose*, with 19 counted at that location 26 Apr (TJ). In twenty other counties, reports were of 1–8 birds. Last: 3 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (CJC) and 2 on 17 May *Pocahontas* (JG).

**Red-necked Grebe:** All: 16–19 Apr at Swan L SP *Carroll* (MTW, DAK, POR), 2 on 20 Apr at Cedar L *Linn* (JF), 26–29 Apr at Grover's L *Dickinson* (ETTh, LAS), 2 May at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP), and 14–24 May at Swan L *Johnson* (JLF, MHB, DP, CJC).

**Eared Grebe:** First: 3 on 22 Mar *Woodbury* (TLu), and then not until 2 on 9 Apr at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (DT). Most: 7 on 18 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP). One or two were found in eight other counties east to *Johnson*. Last: 17 May *Pocahontas* (JG) and 18 May at Grover's L *Dickinson* (LAS).

**Western Grebe:** All: 22 Apr at Diamond L *Dickinson* (ETTh), 2 on 27 Apr at Dan Green Sl *Clay* (LAS), 2 on 29 Apr at Grover's L *Dickinson* (ETTh), 2 on 29 Apr at Pickeral L *Buena Vista* (ETTh), 3 on 18 May at Grover's L (LAS), and 2 on 28 May at Swan L SP *Carroll* (MTW).

**American White Pelican:** First inland migrants: 30 on 12 Mar at Iowa City *Johnson* (JPB). Most: 498 on 6 Apr at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG). Last: 55 on 29 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 84 on 31 May heading north from Guttenburg *Clayton* (DAK).

**NEOTROPIC CORMORANT:** A 1st-year bird was near Riverton WA *Fremont* 3–6 May (\*SJD, \*KDY).

**Double-crested Cormorant:** First: 11 on 22 Mar at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (JG). Most: 1,800 on 11 Apr at L Colchester *Warren* (JG). 535 on 5 Apr at Blackhawk L *Sac* was the largest gathering away from the central Iowa reservoirs (JG).

**American Bittern:** They were reported from seventeen counties, with the first 13 Apr at Harrier M *Boone* (DAK) and 5 on 13 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 8 on 15 May at Panicum Pr *Worth* (SSP).

**Least Bittern:** First: 5 May at South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* (BSc, JLF). Also reported from eight other locations *Guthrie*, *Hancock*, *Fremont*, *Woodbury*, *Boone*, and *Greene* (SJD, JG, JES, RGo, KDY, TLu, LGD).

**Great Blue Heron:** The first five migrants huddled together below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* 8 Mar (DTh).

**Great Egret:** First: 26 Mar *Marshall* (MPR), 27 Mar *Keokuk* (RIA, PHA), 28 Mar *Montgomery* (JJD), and 28 Mar *Wayne* (DT). Gatherings of at least 30 were reported from *Sac*, *Appanoose*, *Marshall*, and *Winneshiek* (MTh, RLC, MPR, DC).

**Snowy Egret:** All: 16 Apr at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC), 22 Apr at Amana L *Iowa* (JF, DP, JLF), 27 Apr at Pin Oak M *Lucas* (RIA, PHA), 1 May at Amana L (RGo), 1 and 2 on 2 May *Polk* (JB, AMJ), and 3 May at Swan L *Johnson* (CJC).

**Little Blue Heron:** Jackie Nooker's ornithology class found an adult 7 May at Aldo Leopold WMA *Bremer*.

**Cattle Egret:** The first of many reports: 3 on 19 Apr at Sweet M *Bremer* (CJC). Most: 34 on 3 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JLF) and 28 on 5 May *Linn* (DK). The only reports from the western one-third of the

state were of 2 on 26 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV), 3 on 30 Apr at Porters L *Page* (KDy), and 19 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (TLu).

**Green Heron:** First: 22 Apr at Terra L Johnston (JG) and 4 on 23 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**Black-crowned Night-Heron:** Except for a shocking 41 on 27 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (BE), reports were of 1–8 birds from 14 counties beginning 13 Apr at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR).

**Yellow-crowned Night-Heron:** The only report was of *Winneshiek's* first: an adult 27 Apr at Burr Oak (Lee Zieke, Lindsay Lee- photo, DC).

**GLOSSY IBIS:** A single photographed with White-faced Ibis 18 May at River-ton WA *Fremont* was Iowa's fourth record (\*KDy). This is the second spring in a row that the species was found in the state.

**White-faced Ibis:** First: 62 on 19 Apr at Diehl Wetlands *Warren* (AB) and 21 on 19 Apr at Colo Ponds *Story* (MPR) [both tie third earliest]. Other large flocks included 20 on 23–25 Apr at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC, DT), and 35 on 26 Apr at Owego Wetlands and 24 on 27 Apr at Luton WA, both *Woodbury* (both GLV). Farther east, 7 were found 20 Apr at Sweet M *Bremer* (Jackie Nooker), 6 on 28 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JLF, DP), 3 on 3 May *Dubuque* (CLW), and 3 on 3 May *Des Moines* (JWR). Last, both on 31 May: singles near Farragut *Fremont* (KDy) and Storm L *Buena Vista* (DB), but see Field Reports Summer 2008.

**Plegadis sp.:** An early flyby 12 Apr *Hancock* wasn't identifiable to species (AB, JG) [ties third earliest].

**Turkey Vulture:** First: 2 on 1 Mar *Appanoose* (RLC), and 2 Mar at both *Warren* (AB) and *Decatur* (NJM). Most: 100 on 25 Mar at Sioux City *Woodbury* (TLu).

**Osprey:** First: 5 Mar at Adel *Dallas*

(TL-details) [second earliest], then not until 26 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB, JHW) and 27 Mar at L Macbride *Johnson* (BSc). Nesting took place at a new location near Brown's L *Woodbury* (POR, GLV, TLu).

**Mississippi Kite:** First: 30 Apr at Shenandoah *Page* (KDy-details) [record earliest] and 1 May at Waterworks P *Polk* (Jeff Karnicky) [second earliest]. All subsequent reports were from their presumed Des Moines *Polk* nesting area.

**Northern Harrier:** Reported throughout Mar and Apr. Most: 24 on 27 Mar *Woodbury* (POR, TLu), 9 on 2 Apr at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK), and 12 on 12 Apr at Harrier M *Boone* (SJD). Last: 29 May *Hancock* (RGo) was the only May report.

**Sharp-shinned Hawk:** Only singles were reported, the last 11 May at Bay's Branch WA *Guthrie* (SJD, JG) and 24 May at Yellow R SF *Allamakee* (SB).

**Cooper's Hawk:** Singles or pairs seen throughout the period, with a peak of 9 migrating through SC Iowa 13 Apr (AB). Nests were found *Warren*, *Clarke*, *Kossuth*, *Story* (2), *Cerro Gordo*, and *Woodbury* (JS, JG, MCK, LGD, WO, RGo, CJF, GLV).

**Northern Goshawk:** One was at Clive *Polk* 1 Mar (DK).

**Red-shouldered Hawk:** There were scattered reports east of a *Clayton-Polk-Decatur* line, with nesting confirmed *Black Hawk* (DP) and *Lucas* (AB). Sightings *Davis* (CRE) and *Appanoose* (KDy), along with *Decatur* and *Lucas*, perhaps indicate a return to historical strongholds for this species.

**Broad-winged Hawk:** First: 15 Apr at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK). Other than 65 on 22 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 34 on 29 Apr at Algona (MCK), all reports were of 1–3 birds. The only confirmed nesting was at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (JLF), although birds were seen at several previous nesting locations.

Two late 1st-year migrants 28 May *Kossuth* finished out the season (MCK).

**Swainson's Hawk:** First: 2 on 7 Apr near Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (GLV). There were many reports of mostly single birds across the western two-thirds of the state. Most: 19 on 15 Apr in a field near Farragut *Fremont* (KDy) and 6 on 6 May *Polk* (JG). Last: 14 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK) and 19 May at Volga R RA *Fayette* (KVS).

**Red-tailed Hawk:** Three dark morph and 2 rufous morph "Western," a Krider's, and a Harlan's Hawk were reported in Mar south and west from *Polk* (JG, KDy, JB).

**Rough-legged Hawk:** Last: 9 Apr at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS) and 12 Apr at both Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (POR).

**Golden Eagle:** All: 1 Mar at Prairie Heritage Center *O'Brien* (TLu), 19 Mar *Allamakee* (DK), 1 Apr at Red Haw SP *Lucas* (AB), and 14 Apr at Big M *Butler* (TSS).

**Merlin:** With the exception of 11 Mar at Owego Wetland *Woodbury* (TLu), 15 single birds were reported migrating through the central one-third of the state, with the last 15 May at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (SJD).

**Peregrine Falcon:** Mar reports were of the Davenport *Scott*, Cedar Rapids *Linn*, and Des Moines *Polk* resident nesters. The first migrants were 12 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP), and 16 Apr at both Shenandoah *Page* (KDy) and *Woodbury* (TLu). There were about eighteen additional reports of 1 or 2 migrants, with the last 15 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD, KDy) and 18 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (LAS).

**Prairie Falcon:** The falcon from the winter season at the Brenton feedlot *Dallas* was last reported 8 Mar (JG).

**Yellow Rail:** All: 23 Apr at Doolittle Pr *Story* (MPr), 6 May *Marshall* (Carl Kurtz), and 7 May at Aldo Leopold WMA *Bremer* (Jackie Nooker).

**Virginia Rail:** First: 19 Apr at Squaw Cr P *Linn* (BSc). Harley Winfrey found one strolling through the woods at Ledges SP *Boone* 30 Apr.

**Sora:** First: 17 Apr at Otter Cr M *Tama* (MPr) and 20 Apr at South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* (MBH). Most: 22 on 27 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (BE), 26 on 3 May at South Sycamore Bottoms (MBH), and 27 on 5 May at Snake Cr M *Greene* (DAK).

**Common Moorhen:** All: 24 Apr at Diehl Wetlands *Warren* (AB), 13 and 20 May at Cone M *Louisa* (CF, RIA, PHA), and 30 May at Harrier M *Boone* (LGD).

**American Coot:** The vanguard was 14 with the invading waterfowl 2 Mar at L *Icaria Adams* (JG). Most: Steve Dinsmore gets a gold star for counting 9,100 on 13 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (the Coot Capital of Iowa). Nests were active 30 May at Colo Ponds *Story* (HZ).

**Sandhill Crane:** The largest flocks were returning to likely nesting areas: 22 on 29 Mar at Cone M *Louisa* (CRE), 22 on three occasions in Apr and May at Pool Sl *Allamakee* (RZ), and 11 on 19 Apr at Sweet M *Bremer* (CJC). Other locations with repeated sightings of possible nesters were Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (EB, DC) and Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy). Groups of 1–4 were found west to *Greene* and *Sac* through the period.

**WHOOPING CRANE:** A wandering 2007 juv from the Wisconsin reintroduction project visited Thorpe P *Winnebago* 13–15 May (WCCB).

**Black-bellied Plover:** First: 8 May *Ringgold* (KDy) and 3 on 9 May at Colo Ponds *Story* (HZ). Then there were four reports of 1–7 birds from the west, a peak of 16 on 20 May in a flooded field *Iowa* (DP), and the last 2 on 25 May at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (DC).

**American Golden-Plover:** First: 3 on

22 Mar at Banner WA *Warren* (AB) and 9 on 22 Mar *Wayne* (JG). Flocks of 100–165 were found 10–27 Apr *Marion*, *Fremont*, *Kossuth*, and *Hancock* (AB, KDy, MCK, RGo). Last: 31 on 17 May at Storm L *Buena Vista* (JG), 6 on 17 May *Woodbury* (TLu), and 3 on 20 May *Marshall* (MPR).

**Semipalmated Plover:** First: 7 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (JG) [third earliest], but the next weren't until 9 on 28 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy). Most: 38 on 13 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh) and 34 were the last 21 May *Kossuth* (MCK). All other reports numbered fewer than 10.

**Piping Plover:** A banded bird 12 and 13 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* was the third earliest (SJD, JG). It was banded along the Missouri R near Ponca, NE in 2006 as an adult, was not seen in 2007, and returned to the banding locale in 2008 (SJD). Two on 26 Apr *Woodbury* were away from their usual location at Port Neal Ponds (GLV), one at a wet, garbage-strewn construction site at Carroll *Carroll* 28 Apr surprised Matt Wetrich, and another migrant was at *Polk City* WA *Polk* 7 May (DTh). On their Iowa nesting grounds, 5 with 3 nests were at MidAmerican Ponds *Pottawattamie* 15 May (SJD) and 4 were at Port Neal Ponds 26 and 27 May without any sign of nesting (POR, TLu).

**Killdeer:** There were no reports between 2 and 12 Mar. If they remained in the area, 10 near Rudd *Floyd* 2 Mar (PH) experienced nights below 0 degrees shortly thereafter. The only large gathering reported was 259 at Banner WA *Warren* 22 Mar (AB).

**Black-necked Stilt:** All: 2 were found 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* by visiting Missouri birders (fide SJD), and a single stilt was at a small wetland *Emmet* 14 and 15 May (ETh, LAS, DH, Steve Anderson- ph).

**American Avocet:** First: 6 Apr at Run-

nells WA *Marion* (JG). The major flight passed through central Iowa beginning with 22 on 25 Apr *Dallas* (RIA, PHA, JG) while 33 were at Gray's L *Polk* (JB). 34 were at Lake View *Sac* the next day (PE) while 129 were at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JB), 96 of which remained 27 Apr at Big Cr L *Polk* (SJD). A few scattered around the state after that, but 38 on 14 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) was the only large flock. The last lingered at Riverton until 20 May (KDy).

**Spotted Sandpiper:** First: 15 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JG- photo). Twenty-two on 11 May at Bays Branch WA *Guthrie* were the most (SJD).

**Solitary Sandpiper:** First: 11 Apr *Fremont* (KDy), followed by 13 Apr at both Rathbun WA *Wayne* (AB) and Runnells WA *Marion* (JS). The only report of more than 3 was 15 on 27 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (DP). Last, both 18 May: near Grimes *Polk* (DAK) and at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

**Greater Yellowlegs:** First: 2 on 15 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 19 Mar at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 43 on 27 Apr *Greene* and 43 on 29 Apr at Ames *Story* (both SJD), followed by 28 on 13 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh). Last: 18 May near Grimes *Polk* (DAK).

**Willet:** First: 16 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP) and 20 Apr *Warren* (AB). Like avocets, Willets poured into central Iowa: 61 on 27 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (JG), 64 also 27 Apr at Long Pond *Guthrie* (JG, SJD), and 52 on 2 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO). Smaller numbers (<20) occurred elsewhere, with 3 on 23 May at Banner WA *Warren* (AB) and 28 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh) the last.

**Lesser Yellowlegs.** First: 15 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), and then none until 5 on 7 Apr at Jester P *Polk* (JG). Most: approx 2,100 in flooded fields 27 Apr *Greene* and *Guthrie* (SJD, JG), 726 on 13

May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh), and the peak elsewhere was 180 *Warren* and *Johnson* (AB, CJC). Last: 3 on 30 May *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Upland Sandpiper:** First: 2 on 14 Apr *Decatur*, where 9 were counted 17 Apr (both NJM).

**WHIMBREL:** One was photographed 20 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (\*KDy).

**Hudsonian Godwit:** First: 11 on 11 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 14 on 19 Apr at Colo Ponds *Story* (MPR). Most: 34 on 28 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 46 on 13 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh), although most reports were of 7 or less. Last, and farthest east: 19 May *Iowa* (KL, DP).

**Marbled Godwit:** It was a big year for Marbled Godwits. First: 7 Apr at Runnells WA *Marion* (JS) and 11 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDy). Most: 15 on 18 Apr *Polk* (JG, JB), 9 on 26 Apr near Lake View *Sac* (PE), 29 on 27 Apr *Greene* and *Guthrie* (SJD), 13 on 17 May at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (DT, RLC), and 16 on 20 May *Marshall* (MPR-details) were the last. From 1–4 were reported from six additional counties.

**Ruddy Turnstone:** All: One on 28 Apr *Woodbury* was record early (TLu, POR). They were also found 8 May at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (KDy), 15 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD), 17 May at Harrier M *Boone* (LGD), 18 May at Shimon M *Pocahontas* (PE), 5 on 20 May at Riverton WA (KDy), and 8 on 21 May *Marshall* (MPR).

**Sanderling:** First: 28 Apr *Woodbury* (TLu POR). Twelve other reports of 1 or 2 were scattered through May, with the largest groups of 4 on 4 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 16 on 17 May *Marshall* (MPR). Last: 22 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (AB).

**Semipalmated Sandpiper:** First, all 27 Apr: *Polk* (JB), 14 *Woodbury* (TLu), and 7 *Guthrie* (JG). 114 were found at River-

ton WA *Fremont* the next day (KDy). Most: 1,500 were reported 13 May at the draining Diamond L *Dickinson* (ETh), 550 on 18 May at Riverton WA (KDy), and 200 on 24 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (MPR). The last were 30 on 26 May *Kossuth* and one in a flooded field *Iowa* 31 May (DP).

**Western Sandpiper:** The only one was found in a flooded field near Grimes *Polk* 18 May (DAK-details).

**Least Sandpiper:** The first arrivals were 6 Apr at Runnells WA *Marion* (JG) and 16 on 11 Apr *Fremont* (KDy). Miniscule numbers were reported except for 1,000 on 13 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh). The last was in the flooded field *Iowa* 31 May (DP).

**White-rumped Sandpiper:** First: 4 were found amid the shorebird fallout *Guthrie* 27 Apr (JG). Most: 450 on 17 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 50 on 26 May *Kossuth* (MCK), otherwise few were found.

**Baird's Sandpiper:** First: 7 Apr at Runnells WA *Marion* (JG) and 4 on 7 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JB). From 1–7 were reported from eight other locations, with the last 18 May: at Harrier M *Boone*, near Webster City *Hamilton*, and at Myre Sl *Winnebago* (all JHW).

**Pectoral Sandpiper:** First: 14 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 23 Mar at Banner WA *Warren* (AB). There was an early peak of 310 on 6 Apr at Runnells WA *Marion* (JG) and a late peak of 267 on 13 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh), with few reports in between. Last: 31 May *Iowa* (DP) and 3 on 31 May at Snake Cr M *Greene* (LGD).

**Dunlin:** The first were 3 on 16 Apr *Woodbury* (TLu) and 18 Apr *Boone* (JHW). Most: 100 on 27 Apr in a flooded field *Hancock* (RGo). Smaller flocks were reported later: 48 on 17 May at Diamond L WA

*Dickinson* (ETh), 26 on 21 May at Polk City WA *Polk* (JG), and 22 on 22 May at Banner WA *Warren* (AB). Eleven on 28 May *Kossuth* were the last (MCK).

**Stilt Sandpiper:** First: One 6 Apr at Runnells WA *Marion* (JG- photo) [second earliest]. The peak reports from eight locations were 17 on 13 May at Diamond L WA *Dickinson* (ETh) and 22 on 18 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY). Last was a single 26 May *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Short-billed Dowitcher:** First: 3 on 5 May at Polk City WA *Polk* (JG) and 2 on 11 May at Bay's Branch WA *Guthrie* (RLC). Most: 70 on 15 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (MPr). Last: 3 on 19 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (TLu) and a single 20 May *Iowa* (DP).

**Long-billed Dowitcher:** First: 18 on 22 Apr at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR). Most: 70–80 were reported 25 Apr at a flooded sod farm *Dallas* (RIA, PHA, AB, JG), approx. 550 on 27 Apr in flooded fields *Greene* and *Guthrie* (SJD, JG), and 130 on 6 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD). One ID'd by voice 21 May near Grimes *Polk* was record late (DAK).

**Wilson's Snipe:** First: 32 on 25 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY) and 60 on 29 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC) were also the most reported. One winnowing 15 May at Panicum Pr *Worth* was late enough to suggest possible nesting (SSP).

**American Woodcock:** First: 2 on 13 Mar *Polk* (JB) and 13 on 13 Mar *Decatur* (NJM).

**Wilson's Phalarope:** First: 2 on 12 Apr at Runnells WA *Marion* (RTr) and 2 on 13 Apr at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SJD). The peak was 27 Apr: 40–50 *Greene* and *Guthrie* (JG, SJD), 13 at Shimon M *Pocahontas* (PE), and 99 at Luton WA *Woodbury* (GLV). Later, 44 were at Riverton WA *Fremont* 18 May (KDY), and then only stragglers until a single 30 May *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Red-necked Phalarope:** All: 3 May *Des Moines* (JWR), 5 May at Green Valley L *Union* (RIA, PHA), 13 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD), 17 May at Sandhill L *Woodbury* (GLV), 19 May *Marshall* (MPr), and 20 May at Riverton WA (KDY).

**Franklin's Gull:** First: 19 on 20 Mar at Adel *Dallas* (TL), and then 22 Mar *Linn*, *Appanoose*, *Pottawattamie* (BSc, JG, POR). Most: 1,000 on 12 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP), while 100–240 were later reported *Boone*, *Dallas*, *Calhoun* (SJD, JB, JG). 48 lingered near Ventura *Cerro Gordo* 31 May (CJF).

**Bonaparte's Gull:** First: 21 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), and then 4 Apr at both Pin Oak M *Lucas* (AB) and Cedar L *Linn* (DP). Most: 56 on 16 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP), 73 on 18 Apr *Dallas* (RIA, PHA), and 57 on 20 Apr at Red Rock Res *Marion* (JG). Last: 38 on 5 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JG).

**Ring-billed Gull:** The largest gathering was 10,000 on 1 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP), although peak counts were around 1,000 birds through the central Iowa reservoirs. 775 on 13 Apr at Meinking M *Dickinson* included many adults on nests (SJD). Thirty late migrants were near Ventura *Cerro Gordo* 31 May with Franklin's Gulls (CJF).

**Herring Gull:** Most: 57 on 30 Mar at Saylorville Res *Polk* (JG). There were no later reports.

**Thayer's Gull:** All: an ad 1 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (SMF) and a juv 18 Mar at Credit Isl *Scott* (SMF).

**Lesser Black-backed Gull:** All: 1 Mar at Credit Isl *Scott* (POR), an ad 9 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (SMF), an ad 13 Mar at Pool 15 *Scott* (SMF), an ad 23 Mar–12 Apr at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (LJP, BKP, POR), and a 2nd-year bird 1–14 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* was joined by an adult 14 Apr (JG).

**Glaucous Gull:** All: a juv 22–24 Mar at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (POR, LJP, BKP, TLU, KDy) was joined by an ad 23 Mar (POR, LJP, BKP), and a 2nd-year bird was at Saylorville Res *Polk* 30 and 31 Mar (JG, JB).

**Least Tern:** All: 2 on 15 May at MidAmerican Ponds *Pottawattamie* (SJD), 16 May at Polk City WA *Polk* (JG), and 26 and 27 May at Port Neal Ponds *Woodbury* (POR, TLU).

**Caspian Tern:** First: 19 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD), then not until 3 May at both Twelve Mile L *Union* and L Anita SP *Cass* (both JG). Most: 30 on 17 May at L Rathbun *Appanoose* (RLC) and 16 on 21 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO). One was still circling Swan L *Carroll* 28 May (MTh).

**Black Tern:** First: 3 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD) and 3 on 3 May at Green Valley L *Union* (JG). Peaked mid-May with 168 on 14 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 194 on 17 May at Maskunkya M *Mahaska* (SKM), but they were still going strong at the end of the month: 80 on 25 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (MCK) and 86 on 31 May near Farragut *Fremont* (KDy).

**Common Tern:** First: 25 Apr at both Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD) and Badger Cr RA *Madison* (JG). A few singles and pairs were reported, but a big push occurred 11 May, when a total of 26 were found at 4 *Guthrie* locations (SJD), and 12 May, with 2 at Brushy Cr RA *Webster* (SJD) and 5 at Banner WA *Warren* (AB). Last: 7 on 19 May at Polk City WA *Polk* (JG).

**Forster's Tern:** First: 5 Apr near Madrid *Boone* (LGD- photo) [second earliest] and 2 on 9 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD). Most: 58 on 26 Apr at Spirit L *Dickinson* (ETH, LAS) and 32 on 17 May at Grover's L *Dickinson* (JG). Last: several 19 May *Iowa* (DP) and 3 on 19 May at Polk City WA *Polk* (JG).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove:** Most: 26 on 1 Mar near Eddyville *Wapello* (JG). There were far fewer reports than there were in 2007.

**WHITE-WINGED DOVE:** In what is likely a preview of coming attractions, there were multiple sightings of this now regularly occurring species: 27 Apr *Marshall* (\*Carl Kurtz), 1–9 May at Oskaloosa *Mahaska* (\*SKM), 6 and 7 May at Waterloo *Black Hawk* (\*FM, TSS), 26 May at Ames *Story* (\*WO), and 26–30 May at Glidden *Carroll* (\*VW).

**Yellow-billed Cuckoo:** Arriving very late in the period, only 3 were reported: 24 May at Yellow R SF *Allamakee* (SB), and 31 May at both Squaw Cr P *Linn* (DP) and Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO).

**Black-billed Cuckoo:** First: a nocturnal migrant 19 May at Grimes *Polk* (JB), followed by 24 May *Warren*, *Fremont*, and *Allamakee* (JS, KDy, SB). Singles were reported from four additional counties.

**Snowy Owl:** One was east of Irvington *Kossuth* 18 Mar (MCK).

**Long-eared Owl:** All: 1 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), 2 until 3 Mar at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD), 5 on 4 Mar *Dallas* (JG), and 9 Mar at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Short-eared Owl:** All: 1 Mar at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB), 2 and 9 Mar *Warren* (JS), 7 Mar at Owego Wetlands *Woodbury* (POR), 2 on 13 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), 2 Apr *Lucas* (AB), and 2 on 19 Apr *Fremont* (KDy).

**Northern Saw-whet Owl:** The only reports were 8 and 15 Mar at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr).

**Common Nighthawk:** First: 6 on 26 Apr at Brown's L *Woodbury* (POR) and 27 Apr *Clarke* (RIA, PHA).

**Whip-poor-will:** First: 20 Apr *Decatur* (JRL) and 21 Apr at Saylorville *Polk* (SJD).

**Chimney Swift:** First: 3 on 18 Apr

at Cumming Wetlands Warren and 2 on 18 Apr *Dallas* (both JG). Roosts of spring migrants are rarely reported in Iowa: 60 entered one chimney at Algona *Kossuth* 23 May (MCK).

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird:** First: 23 Apr *Decatur* (NJM, JRL) [third earliest], 24 Apr at Shenandoah *Page* (KDY), and 25 Apr *Warren* (JG).

**Red-headed Woodpecker:** With *Decatur* posting higher migration (Kenne 2007, Hertzell 2007), CBC (Caster 2007), and wintering totals (Cecil 2007) than the rest of the state's reports combined, 56 on 5 Apr (NJM) were no surprise. Does this species of concern truly concentrate in the *Decatur* area, or are similar numbers unreported elsewhere? The first migrant noted north of wintering areas was 3 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

**Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** An imm 8 Mar *Harrison* (JG) may have wintered, but one 29 Mar in Carolyn Fischer's yard *Cerro Gordo* (CJF) definitely signalled the beginning of migration. On 17 May at Effigy Mounds *Allamakee*, Karen Vista-Sparkman considered this species to be the most numerous woodpecker present.

**Northern Flicker:** Where there had been none before, 50 appeared *Woodbury* 1 Apr (POR). Red-shafted individuals were reported 11 Mar *Woodbury* (TLu) and 5–8 Apr *Johnson* (JLF).

**Pileated Woodpecker:** In the west, one 14 Apr along Elliott Cr *Woodbury* was a first county record (TLu, GLV), and the species still inhabits the upper Little Sioux R at Wanata SP *Clay* (LAS).

**Olive-sided Flycatcher:** First: 12 Apr at Swan L SP *Carroll* (MTH-details) [record early], then not until 7 May at both Mud Cr WA *Henry* (BSc) and Geode SP *Henry* (JLF). One third of the reports were from 30–31 May.

**Eastern Wood-Pewee:** First: 30 Apr near Conesville *Muscatine* (SSP-details) [ties third earliest], then 7 May at both Geode SP *Henry* (JWR) and Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

**Yellow-bellied Flycatcher:** First: 3 May at Walnut Woods SP *Polk* (AMJ-details) [record early], then calling 13 May at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK). They were reported from a dozen counties as far NW as 25 May *Sioux* (JVD). Most: 5 on 22–23 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), 6 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK), and 4 on 31 May at Jakway Forest *Buchanan* (DAK).

**Acadian Flycatcher:** First: 6 May at Macbride NA *Johnson* (BSc). Although *Kossuth* birds have been regular in recent years, one at Smith WA *Kossuth* 26 May was still outside of their known nesting range (MCK).

**Alder Flycatcher:** First: 15 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (SJD). They were commonly found the end of May: 10 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK), 8 on 31 May *Story* (SSP), and 5 on 31 May at Red Feather Pr *Polk* (DTh). Easily the highest density reported was along the Iowa R corridor *Tama* 28 May, where Shane Patterson found 66 while conducting point counts through the day.

**Willow Flycatcher:** First: 9 May at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW).

**Least Flycatcher:** First: 25 Apr at Moorehead P *Ida* (PE, POR-details), 26 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDY) [second earliest], and 29 Apr *Johnson* (SSP). There were several comments on the abundance of Empids this spring. High counts included 35 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), 26 on 13 May at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), 28 on 13 May at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK), and estimated 100 mixed Least and Alder Flycatchers 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Eastern Phoebe:** The first 2 arrived



with the warmth 2 Mar at Heron Bend *Lee* (\*SLB) [record earliest], and then not until 19 Mar *Jefferson*, which Diane Porter considered a late FOY.

**Great Crested Flycatcher:** The first were 21 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 28 Apr at *Swan L Johnson* (JLF).

**Western Kingbird:** First: 3 on 4 May at the Capitol Complex *Polk* (JG) and 10 on 6 May at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (KDy). Away from *Woodbury* in the west, they were reported from *Guthrie*, *Warren*, *Boone*, *Linn*, and *Tama* (DTh, MTW, JS, AB, POR, LGD, DLF, SSP).

**Eastern Kingbird:** First: 20 Apr *Keokuk* (CRE) and 21 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher:** All: 17 Apr *Worth* (\*Greg Hanson) and 17 May at Saylorville Res *Polk* (\*DTh).

**Loggerhead Shrike:** First: 20 Mar *Monona* (POR). They were found as far north as *Sioux*, *O'Brien*, and *Chickasaw* (JVD, LAS, PH).

**Northern Shrike:** Reported from sixteen counties, with the last 29 Mar *Sioux* (POR) and 3 Apr at Myre Sl *Winnebago* (JHW) [third latest].

**White-eyed Vireo:** First: 20 Apr at Witham Woods *Jefferson* (CRE). They were reported from ten additional counties east and south from *Boone*. Jim Durbin found 4 around L Sugema *Van Buren* 12 May.

**Bell's Vireo:** First: 3 May at Porter's L *Page* (KDy) and 4 May at West Lake P *Scott* (WMZ). Most: 13 on 17 May *Woodbury* (POR) and 8 on 31 May *Harrison* (GLV). The northernmost in the east were found *Polk* and *Linn*.

**Yellow-throated Vireo:** First: 23 Apr at Sugar Bottom RA *Johnson* (BSc) [ties third earliest] and 6 on 24 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**Blue-headed Vireo:** The earliest arrivals were 26 Apr at both Walnut Woods SP *Polk* (KVS) and Squaw Cr P *Linn* (JDu,

DP). Most: 6 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP). Last: 27 May at both L Meyer *Wineshiek* (DC) and Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), and 30 May *Dickinson* (POR).

**Warbling Vireo:** First: 22 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* and 24 Apr at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (both CF).

**Philadelphia Vireo:** First: 3 on 5 May at Manti P *Fremont* (KDy) and 6 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (JLF). Three were also seen 22 May at Hickory Hill P (KL, CRE) and 27 May at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (POR). Last: 3 on 30 May *Story* (SSP, WO).

**Red-eyed Vireo:** First: 26 Apr at L Ahquabi SP *Warren* (JG) [third earliest], but they didn't arrive in numbers until much later. Peak: 10 on 22 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CRE) and 14 on 27 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

**Blue Jay:** Flocks of migrants were noted at Algona *Kossuth* heading farther north to nest: 200 on 1 May and 50 on 15 May (MCK).

**Purple Martin:** First: 26 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) and 30 Mar *Jefferson* (DCP). The largest flock reported was 10 on 12 May at L Sugema *Van Buren* (JDu).

**Tree Swallow:** First: 55 on 19 Mar at Princeton M *Scott* (DR). Most: 600 on 9 Apr at Dean *Appanoose* (RLC, DT) and 2000 on 27 Apr at Big Cr L *Polk* (SJD).

**Northern Rough-winged Swallow:** First: 5 Apr at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr) [ties second earliest] and then 7 Apr *Decatur* (NJM).

**Bank Swallow:** First: 18 Apr at Gray's L *Polk* (JB) and 19 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (SJD). No large nesting colonies were reported.

**Cliff Swallow:** First: 19 on 19 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (BE) and 21 Apr at Iowa City *Johnson* (MHB). Most: 200 migrants arrived 1 May at Cedar L *Linn* (BSc), and Dan Dorrance noted a colony of almost

1000 birds under the Nishnabotna R bridge at Hamburg *Fremont*.

**Barn Swallow:** First: 7 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 9 Apr *Polk* (JG).

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** One of the most reported birds this spring. Widely scattered winter visitors remained at feeders into May from *Scott* (WMZ) to *Woodbury* (GLV). There was no evidence of nesting, but from 1–3 were found in fifteen counties during May, with birds through the end of the season *Kossuth* (MCK) and *Cerro Gordo* (CJF).

**Brown Creeper:** The only May reports were 3 May at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr) and 17 May at Yellow R SF *Alamakee* (KVS).

**Carolina Wren:** Half of the fourteen reports came from *Story* and *Polk*. Other than 6 on 12 Mar *Page* (KDY), all observations were of 1 or 2 birds, including outlying singles 19 Mar at *Algona Kossuth* (MCK) and 3 May at Lake View *Sac* (PE).

**BEWICK'S WREN:** The season's first junkyard Bewick's Wren near Argyle *Lee* was reported 22 Apr (CF), and 2 were seen there 9 May (KDY).

**House Wren:** First: 16 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and *Page* (KDY), and 17 Apr *Appanoose* (DT).

**Winter Wren:** Five on 6 Apr at L Ahquabi SP *Warren* (JS) probably included new migrants and were the most reported. The only May birds were 1 May at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 3 May *Johnson* (MHB, CRE).

**Sedge Wren:** First: 23 Apr at Doolittle Pr *Story* (MPr) [ties second earliest], followed by 27 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (JG) and 3 on 27 Apr at Saylorville Res *Polk* (KVS).

**Marsh Wren:** First: 3 on 19 Apr at Sweet M *Bremer* (CJC) and 21 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (RTr).

**Golden-crowned Kinglet:** First: 3 on

21 Mar at Grammer Grove WA *Marshall* (MPr) and 2 on 22 Mar *Decatur* (NJM). Most: 8 on 5 Apr at Swan L SP *Carroll* (JG). Last: 20 Apr at Sparks Cemetery *Boone* (LGD) and 29 Apr at Ledges SP *Boone* (JHW).

**Ruby-crowned Kinglet:** First: 21 Mar *Polk* (DK), 23 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), and 3 on 23 Mar at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (POR). Most: 50 on 26 Apr at L Ahquabi SP *Warren* (JG) and 39 on 29 Apr at Brookside P *Story* (DAK). Two on 24 May at Hendrickson M *Story* (MPr) would normally be considered late, but singles 28 May at both Ames *Story* (DAK) and Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD) tied for the second latest ever.

**Blue-gray Gnatcatcher:** First: 17 Apr at Starr's Cave *Des Moines* (JRL) and 2 on 18 Apr *Decatur* (JRL, NJM). Nineteen were counted 5 May at Robison Wildlife Acres *Story* (DAK).

**Eastern Bluebird:** Nineteen on 11 Mar *Woodbury* was the largest flock reported (POR).

**Veery:** First: 7 May *Marshall*, *Story*, and *Carroll* (MPr, SSP, WO, MTW). Late migrants were found 24 May at the Sioux City airport *Woodbury* (POR), 4 on 24 May below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* (RLC), 27 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), and 28 May at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:** Reports began before 1 May without identification details. Up to 10 were found across the state (10 on 18 May at White WA *Cerro Gordo* RGo), and 10 and 34 nocturnal migrants were counted 18 and 19 May at Grimes *Polk* (JB). The last were found 26–28 May *Story* and *Kossuth* (DAK, MCK).

**Swainson's Thrush:** Like Gray-cheeked Thrush, a few Swainson's were reported in Apr lacking details. They were commonly found in the north in May: 21 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), 79

on 18 May *Kossuth* (MCK), 167 nocturnal migrants were counted 19 May at Grimes *Polk* (JB), and 20 on 26 May at Pilot Knob SP *Winnebago* (RGo); and they lingered through 31 May *Marshall*, *Hancock*, *Story*, *Sioux*, and *Warren* (MPR, CJE, SSP, WO, JVD, JS).

**Hermit Thrush:** First: 26 Mar at Cedar Rapids *Linn* (BSc) and 30 Mar *Floyd* (PH). The storm system of 10–11 Apr grounded many Hermit Thrushes in NC Iowa: 26 *Sioux* (POR), an estimated 200 at Ft Defiance SP *Emmet* (POR), and 45 at Grover's L *Dickinson* (POR), all 12 Apr; and 32 at Sunken Grove WA *Pocahontas* (SJD), 31 at Huston P *Palo Alto* (LAS), and 41 at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), all 13 Apr. They remained rather common through late Apr, with the last 4 May at Pinicon Alders *Mitchell* (JHW) and 6 May at Liscomb *Marshall* (MPR-details).

**Wood Thrush:** First: 26 Apr at Hartman Reserve *Black Hawk* (Tom Stone fide SB), 27 Apr at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (JPa), and 28 Apr *Warren* (RTr). Twelve on 3 May at Sharon Bluffs SP *Appanoose* were the most reported (RLC).

**Varied Thrush:** One frequented the feeder of Joan Berns NW of Waukon *Allamakee* from "sometime in October 2007" until 2 Apr (photo).

**Gray Catbird:** First: 24 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), 25 Apr at L Ahquabi SP *Warren* (AB), and 26 Apr *Polk* (KVS) and *Jefferson* (DCP).

**Northern Mockingbird:** First: 10 Apr *Black Hawk* (MWJ). Singles were found south from a *Polk*, *Floyd*, *Delaware* line, with a single bird found west of Spirit L *Dickinson* 4 May (ETH), and a peak of 4 on 26 May *Decatur* (JRL).

**Brown Thrasher:** First: 5 Apr *Warren* (JS) and 6 Apr at South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* (MHB).

**American Pipit:** First: 11 Mar *Deca-*

*tur* (NJM) and 14 Mar *Floyd* (PH). Very few were reported, with the last on 4 May: 5 *Dickinson* (ETH) and 6 *Fremont* (KDY).

**Cedar Waxwing:** High counts, a study in irruptive contrasts: 300 on 7 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDY) and Chris Edwards' FOY 30 on 22 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson*.

**Blue-winged Warbler:** First: 2 May at Oak Grove RA *Polk* (JB), 3 May *Cass* (JG), and 2 on 3 May at Coralville Res *Johnson* (CRE). They were found in all areas except the extreme NW and SW, with peaks of 10 on 17 May *Allamakee* (KVS) and 6 on 13 May at Stephens SF *Lucas* (AB). Nest-building was noted 29 May at Cedar Cr Unit *Lucas* (AB).

**Golden-winged Warbler:** First: 1 May at Burr Oak *Winneshiek* (Lee Zieke fide DC) and 2 on 2 May at Cedar Rapids *Linn* (BSc). There were reports across the eastern two-thirds of the state except for 21 May at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (GLV, POR, TLu). Peak counts of 5–8 occurred 18–22 May *Lucas*, *Ida*, *Kossuth*, and *Cerro Gordo* (AB, PE, MCK, PH). A Brewster's hybrid was noted 24 May *Allamakee* (SB). The final migrants were 26 May at L Meyer *Winneshiek* (Larry Reis fide DC) and 30 May at Swan L SP *Carroll* (Stan Buman).

**Tennessee Warbler:** First: 1 May *Decatur* (JRL), and 2 May at both Brookside P *Story* (SSP) and Cottonwood RA *Polk* (JB). They peaked late: 30 on 27 May at L Meyer *Winneshiek* (DC) and 50 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK), and were still present 31 May *Story*, *Marshall*, *Kossuth*, and *Winneshiek* (SSP, WO, MPR, MCK, Larry Reis fide DC).

**Orange-crowned Warbler:** Earliest arrivals: 17 Apr at Starr's Cave *Des Moines* (JWR) and 18 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Some large groups were found, including 50 on 26 Apr at Hartman Reserve *Black Hawk* (Tom

Stone fide SB), 31 on 29 Apr at Brookside P *Story* (DAK), and 28 on 7 May at Brookside P (SSP). Last: 23 May at both Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (CJC) and Brookside P (SSP).

**Nashville Warbler:** They were first found 23 Apr at Sugar Bottom RA *Johnson* (BSc) and 24 Apr at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (CF). Most: 25 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP) and 45 foraging in Virginia Bluebells 14 May at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK). Lingering migrants were found 30 May at both Algona *Kossuth* (MCK) and Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo).

**Northern Parula:** First: 17 Apr at Starr's Cave *Des Moines* (JWR) and 22 Apr at Waterworks P *Polk* (JB). Most: 7 on 2 May *Decatur* (JRL) and 5 on 9 May at Moorehead P *Ida* (PE). Late birds 26 May *Sac* (MTh), 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK), and 31 May at McFarland P *Story* (WO) were heading for more northern breeding areas, but 4 on 27 May at Stone SP *Woodbury* probably mark the upper limit of nesting along the western border.

**Yellow Warbler:** First noted 23 Apr *Jefferson* (DCP) [third earliest] and 2 on 26 Apr *Johnson* (DP). Most: 36 on 21 May at Murphy P *Cerro Gordo* (PH). Migrants were still passing through *Story* 27 and 31 May (SSP).

**Chestnut-sided Warbler:** First: 5 May at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (KVS), and 7 May both *Story* (SSP, WO) and *Henry* (JWR). Most: 10 on 23 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP) and 25 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK). Late migrants were still present 31 May *Warren*, *Buchanan*, *Winneshiek*, *Marshall*, *Hancock*, and *Story* (JS, DAK, Larry Reis fide DC, MPr, CJF, WO).

**Magnolia Warbler:** The first 3 were at Brookside P *Story* 7 May (SSP), followed by 9 May at both Cottonwood RA *Polk* (KVS) and Manikowski Pr *Clinton* (CLW). There was a peak of 18 at Murphy P *Cerro Gordo* (PH) and 16 at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK),

both 18 May, followed by another of 21 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK). The last of the spring season was 31 May *Winneshiek* (Larry Reis fide DC).

**Cape May Warbler:** First: 4 May near Hopkinton *Delaware* (BSc) and 8 May at L Meyer *Winneshiek* (Larry Reis fide DC). One or two were reported from eighteen locations NE of a *Sioux* (JVD) to *Mahaska* (Spring IOU meeting) line, with a peak of 3 on 21 May at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK). Last: 26 May at both Liscomb *Marshall* (MPr) and Oak Grove RA *Polk* (DTh).

**Black-throated Blue Warbler:** Richard Trieff found the only one: 17 May at Woodland Mounds *Warren*.

**Yellow-rumped Warbler:** First: 5 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), followed by 6 Apr *Johnson*, *Story*, *Polk*, and *Marion* (DP, WO, DTh, JG). The largest flocks were 300 feeding in a cornfield 25 Apr across from Badger Cr RA *Madison* (JG) and 100 on 26 Apr at Hartman Reserve *Black Hawk* (Tom Stone fide SB), while other peak counts until 4 May were 25–60. An intergrade between Myrtle and Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warblers was photographed 22 Apr at Sweet M *Bremer* (Kent Nickell), and details were given for an Audubon's Warbler 3 May at Riverton WA *Fremont* (WRS). Single stragglers lingered until 28 May at Hurlburt WA *Kossuth* (MCK), and 31 May at both Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and *Warren* (JS).

**Black-throated Green Warbler:** First: 4 May at Hanging Rock Woods *Johnson* (CJC) and 5 May at Camp Hantesa *Boone* (JHW). They were rather widely reported, including the west (4 on 19 May at Moorehead P *Ida* PE, and 2 on 20 May at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* POR), but not in large numbers, with the highest count being 5 on 15 May *Floyd* (PH). Last: 2 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK) and 30 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo).

**Blackburnian Warbler:** First: a photographed male 25 Apr at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (TSS) [record early], then 3 May at Sharon Bluffs SP *Appanoose* (RLC). Most: 10 on 17 May in Chris Edwards' yard *Johnson*, 6 on 23 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), and 6 on 27 May at L Meyer *Wineshiek* (DC). They were late 30 May at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), and 31 May at both Pilot Knob SP *Hancock* (CJF) and McFarland P *Story* (WO).

**Yellow-throated Warbler:** First: 14 Apr at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CF, JWR) and 17 Apr at Starr's Cave *Des Moines* (JWR). One near the Coralville Res dam *Johnson* remained on territory into the summer (JES), and the usual birds were found in nesting areas south from a Ledges SP *Boone* to *Johnson* to Lansing *Allamakee* line.

**Pine Warbler:** A veritable explosion of Pine Warbler reports began with a 22 Mar visit to Carolyn Fischer's yard *Cerro Gordo* (CJF-details) by what was almost surely the 15–17 Nov, 2007 bird overwintering nearby (Hertzel 2008). Migrants followed 24 Apr at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (Tom Stone fide SB), 26 Apr at Walnut Woods *Polk* (KVS), 29 Apr at Eldon WA *Davis* (CRE), 10 May at L Keomah *Mahaska* (MPr, JLF, AMJ, Dak) 12 May at L Sugema *Van Buren* (JDu), 20 May at both Walnut Woods (AMJ) and Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (POR) [tie third latest], and 25 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo) [record latest].

**Prairie Warbler:** A silent single bird was well described 2 May at Nine Eagles SP *Decatur* (\*JRL, \*Chelem Wilson).

**Palm Warbler:** First: 22 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (CF) and 23 Apr *Jefferson* (DCP). Most: 30 on 29 Apr at Scott Co P *Scott* (WMZ) and 18 on 30 Apr near Conesville *Muscatine* (SSP). A dozen were still at Eagle L *Hancock* 21 May (RGo). Last: 27 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro*

*Gordo* (RGo) and 30 May at Lime Cr Cons Area *Cerro Gordo* (PH).

**Bay-breasted Warbler:** The first was found 14 May at Eagle Point P *Dubuque* (CLW), and then 15 May at both Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (KL, CRE) and *Floyd* (PH). From 1–3 were reported from another thirteen locations, including *Woodbury*, *Sac*, and *Sioux* in the west (POR, MTh, JVD). The end of migration: Brookside P *Story* (SSP), 2 at Union Grove SP *Tama* (MPr), and 2 at Hampton Cemetery *Franklin* (RGo), all 26 May; and 30 May *Dickinson* (POR).

**Blackpoll Warbler:** First, all 7 May: Union Grove SP *Tama* (MPr), 2 at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), and 2 at Geode SP *Henry* (JWR). The highest numbers were reported from the SW 20 May: 14 at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* and 12 at Cold Springs P *Cass* (both TH). In central Iowa, 9 were at Brookside P *Story* 23 May (SSP) and 8 were below Saylorville Res dam *Polk* 24 May (RLC). Singles were still at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* 30 May (RGo) and Pilot Knob SP *Hancock* 31 May (CJF).

**Cerulean Warbler:** First: 26 Apr at Sycamore Access *Polk* (JW). Birds 13 May at Springbrook SP *Guthrie* and 24 May at Whiterock NA *Guthrie* (both MTW) seem to mark the western edge of their range, while one on territory 31 May at Pilot Knob SP *Hancock* (CJF) places the northwest boundary.

**Black-and-white Warbler:** First: 22 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 24 Apr at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (Tom Stone fide SB). Most: 22 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP) and 14 on 9 May at Moorehead P *Ida* (PE). Last: 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK) and 30 May at Elk Rock SP *Marion* (AB).

**American Redstart:** First: 29 Apr at L Keomah *Mahaska* (SKM) and 2 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP). Large numbers of migrants passed through in late May, in-

cluding 27 on 21 May at Murphy P *Cerro Gordo* (PH), 60 on 27 May at L Meyer *Winneshiek* (DC), and 60 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Prothonotary Warbler:** The first weren't reported from the SE: 27 Apr at Sycamore Access *Polk* (JW), 28 Apr at Lakin Sl *Guthrie* (RIA, PHA), and, surprisingly, 30 Apr at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (GLV). They were also found outside normal range 3 May *Cerro Gordo* (CJF) and 24 May at Black Hawk L *Sac* (MTh).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** All: 1 May at Croton Unit *Lee* (JWR), overshooting 2 May at both Yellow Banks *Polk* (AMJ) and Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (POR), 3 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (JPa), 4 and 8 May at Croton Unit (KVS, KDy), 4 May at Sand Cr WA *Decatur* (AMJ), and 19 and 26 May at L Ahquabi SP *Warren* (RIA, PHA, JS).

**Ovenbird:** First: 22 Apr at L Ahquabi SP *Warren* (AB), followed by 2 at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (TSS) and 6 *Decatur* (NJM), both 25 Apr. The peak reports were in early May: 10 on 4 May at Green Hollow WA *Fremont* (KDy) and 14 on 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP).

**Northern Waterthrush:** First, all 26 Apr: *Tama* (SSP), *Polk* (KVS), *Johnson* (DP), *Black Hawk* (Tom Stone fide SB), and *Marshall* (MPR). Most: 8 on 27 Apr at Sycamore Access *Polk* (JW). The final spring bird was 30 May at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo).

**Louisiana Waterthrush:** First: 5 Apr at both Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (CF) and *Decatur* (NJM). One at Ft Defiance SP *Emmet* 17 May was the only bird reported outside their usual range (JG).

**Kentucky Warbler:** The first at Donnellson Unit *Lee* 24 Apr tied record early (CF). Birds outside the SE 1/2 of Iowa were found 11 May at Moorehead P *Ida* (PE), 20 May at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (POR), and 26 May at Pilot Knob SP *Winnebago* (JB).

**Connecticut Warbler:** Nineteen birds were found 21–31 May at thirteen locations in ten counties in the eastern 1/2 of the state. Most: 3 on 24 May at Woodland Mounds *Warren* (JS) and 3 on 26 May at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Mourning Warbler:** First: 11 May at Moorehead P *Ida* (PE) and 12 May at Lacey-Keosauqua SP *Van Buren* (JDu). In the NW, where warblers are often more difficult to find, three were at Blackhawk L *Sac* 26 May (MTh), and one was at Stone SP *Woodbury* 27 May (TLu). The same conditions that triggered the Connecticut Warbler fallout affected migrating Mourning Warblers: 7 were found 24 May at Woodland Mound *Warren* (JS) and 5 on 26 May at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK). Eleven remained in eight counties 31 May.

**Common Yellowthroat:** First: 22 Apr *Decatur* (NJM), and then 26 Apr both *Linn* (JDu) and *Lucas* (JG). Even early-arriving locally-nesting warblers were still migrating in late May, as shown by a female 27 May in Shane Patterson's yard *Ames Story*.

**Hooded Warbler:** First: 22–25 Apr at George Wyth SP *Black Hawk* (Tom Stone fide SB), 26 Apr at Hartman Reserve *Black Hawk* (Tom Stone fide SB), and 26 Apr at Robison Wildlife Acres *Story* (TT). Away from the regular Donnellson Unit *Lee* location, birds were found 1 May at Swan L SP *Carroll* (MTW), 6–10 May at Sugar Bottom RA *Johnson* (BSc, MHB), 14 May at Hickory Hill P *Johnson* (JLF, CRE), 18 May at Ledges SP *Boone* (RIA, PHA), and 20 May at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (GLV).

**Wilson's Warbler:** First: 3 May at Iowa City *Johnson* (MHB) and 5 May at Camp Hantesa *Boone* (JHW). The peak of 15 was running late 27 May at L Meyer *Winneshiek* (DC), and the last were at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo) and at Ames and McFarland P *Story* (WO) 31 May.

**Canada Warbler:** The first were spotted 13 and 14 May at Croton and Donnellson Units *Lee* (JDu, JWR). There was notable movement in the west, with 2 on 19 May at Moorehead P *Ida* (PE), 20 May at Cold Springs P *Cass* (TH), 3–5 on 20–21 May at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (POR, TLu, GLV), and 21 May at Manti P *Fremont* (K Dy). Most: 10 on 24 May at Woodland Mounds *Warren* (JS). The last for the reporting period were 30 May at both *Winneshieck* (Larry Reis fide DC) and Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo).

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** The first was found 1 May at Croton Unit *Lee* (JWR). They were also reported from *Henry, Mahaska, Van Buren, Decatur, Clarke, Story*, and 24 May at Whiterock NA *Guthrie* (MTW).

**Summer Tanager:** First: 26 Apr at Starr's Cave *Des Moines* (CF) and 30 Apr at Brookside P *Story* (Mark Dobbe, WO). During a mid-month dry spell, exploring birds were found north of their regular range 7 May at Lime Cr Cons Area *Cerro Gordo* (Todd VonEhwegen fide CJF), 10 May Carroll *Carroll* (MTh), 12 May at Moorehead P *Ida* (PE), 13 May at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD), 13 May in Ed Thelen's yard *Dickinson*, and 14 May at USNWR *Kossuth* (Becky Esser). The most reported were 7 on 16 May *Decatur* (JRL) and 5 on 24 May at Waubesa P *Fremont* (K Dy).

**Scarlet Tanager:** First: 25 Apr *Decatur* (NJM). Six on 17 May at Sharon Bluffs SP *Appanoose* (RLC) were the most reported.

**Spotted Towhee:** All: an overwinterer last seen 1 Mar at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD), 22 Mar and 5 and 22 Apr *Decatur* could have been one that overwintered at that location (NJM), 27 Mar at Sioux Center (JVD), 12 Apr at Johnston *Polk* (DTh), 19 Apr Carroll (POR), and 3–7 May at Bronson *Woodbury* (TLu).

**Eastern Towhee:** First: 16 Mar *Jefferson* (DCP) and 6 on 21 Mar *Decatur* (NJM), where 21 were counted 18 Apr (NJM).

**American Tree Sparrow:** Most: 300 on 11 Mar *Woodbury* (POR) and 125 on 22 Mar at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB), after which numbers steadily dropped. The last were 20 Apr *Johnson* (DP) and 5 on 23 Apr at Bobolink WPA *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Chipping Sparrow:** The first were found 12 Apr, fallout from the storm: at Grimes *Polk* (JB), Des Moines *Polk* (KVS), the Balch residence *Emmet* (JG), and Pleasant Cr RA *Linn* (DP).

**Clay-colored Sparrow:** The first, and largest flock: 9 on 26 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO). From 1–5 were reported east to *Fayette*, where the last was found 19 May at Volga R RA (KVS).

**Field Sparrow:** They first appeared in SC Iowa 21 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) and 4 on 25 Mar *Appanoose* (DT). Most: 38 on 13 Apr at Pierce Cr *Page* (K Dy).

**Vesper Sparrow:** The earliest arrivals were 2 on 4 Apr *Mitchell* (JHW), and 5 Apr both *Boone* and *Calhoun* (both JG).

**Lark Sparrow:** First: 16 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 18 Apr at Bjorkboda M *Hamilton* (JHW). I had sightings at three locations *Kossuth* in May, where Lark Sparrow has been of casual occurrence in the past (MCK).

**Savannah Sparrow:** The first was at a feeder 3 Mar *Decatur* (JRL, NJM) [record early], and then 11 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (K Dy). Flocks of 50 on 9 Apr (DT) and 60 on 23 Apr (RLC) were counted at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose*.

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** The first were singing 16 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) and 24 Apr at Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS).

**Henslow's Sparrow:** First: 14 Apr near L Sugema *Van Buren* (CF, JWR), 6 on 20 Apr at Kellerton BCA *Ringgold* (WO),

and 20 Apr *Jefferson* (CRE). Except for 27 Apr *Fremont* (KDy) and 3 on 8 May *Floyd* (JHW), reports came from sixteen counties south and east from *Boone*. The highest concentration was around L Sugema, where 50 were counted 12 May (JDu).

**Le Conte's Sparrow:** All: 16 Apr at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC), 6 on both 23 and 25 Apr at Sedan Bottoms (RLC, DT), 3 on 23 Apr *Clarke* (AB), and 6 on 27 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (JG).

**Fox Sparrow:** A number of individuals wintered north to *Cerro Gordo* (Cecil 2008), but 20 on 22 Mar in a *Cerro Gordo* yard (CJF) signaled the first wave of migrants. The highest count was 65 grounded 13 Apr at Trumbull L *Clay* (SJD). Those, and 3 on 14 Apr at Sparks Cemetery *Boone* (LGD), were the last reported.

**Song Sparrow:** The most reported by far were 118 on 9 Apr at Voas Nature Center *Dallas* (TL).

**Lincoln's Sparrow:** The first was 29 Mar at Sioux Center *Sioux* (JVD), then not until 11 Apr at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy). Mostly singles were reported, but 13 were found 7 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP). The final migrants were 26 May at Grimes *Polk* (JB) and 2 on 28 May *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Swamp Sparrow:** Both counts submitted for 27 Apr at Errington M *Polk* indicate a migration peak: 40 (SJD) and 127 (BE). As none nest nearby, one 7 May at Brookside P *Story* was still migrating (SSP).

**White-throated Sparrow:** The largest groups reported were 50 on 27 Apr at Saylorsville Res *Polk* (JB) and 70 on 7 and 8 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP). The last spring birds: 30 May at both Elk Rock SP *Marion* (AB) and Loess Hills WA *Monona* (TLu), and 31 May at Smith WA *Kossuth* (MCK).

**Harris's Sparrow:** The first migrants were 11 on 13 Mar at Owego Wetlands

*Woodbury* (POR). Few were reported, with the highest totals 11–18 birds. Last: 16 May at Thorpe P *Winnebago* (CJF) and 4 on 19 May at Algona *Kossuth* (Becky Esser).

**White-crowned Sparrow:** Migrant arrivals began with 4 on 25 Apr at Walnut Woods SP *Polk* (JG), 26 Apr at Cedar Rapids *Linn* (DP), and 27 Apr at Maskunkya M *Mahaska* (SKM). There were scattered reports of up to 6 birds until the last singles 19 May at Algona *Kossuth* (Becky Esser) and 23 May at Polk City WA *Polk* (DTh).

**Dark-eyed Junco:** "Oregon" type juncos were reported 3 Mar *Decatur* (NJM) and 2 on 23 Mar at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK). The last Slate-colored birds were seen 9 and 10 May at Ames *Story* (SJD, WO).

**Lapland Longspur:** The peak date was 27 Mar, with 1110 *Hamilton* (SJD) and 2000 at Luton *Woodbury* (POR). Last: 30 on 23 Apr at Bobolink WPA *Kossuth* dwindled to a single at that location 27 Apr (both MCK).

**Smith's Longspur:** First: 35 on 21 Mar *Polk* (DK), and 25 on 22 Mar at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* that increased to 60 birds 27 Mar (TJ, RLC). Next, 10 on 1 Apr *Lucas* (AB), a singing bird 5 Apr *Floyd* (PH), 17–35 on 6–20 Apr at Errington M *Polk* (AB, JG, KVS), as many as 300 on 6 Apr along the *Johnson/Muscatine* line (CJC, BSc, DP), 19 on 12 Apr near Slater *Polk* (SJD), and 21 on 19 Apr at Dewey's Pasture *Palo Alto* (LAS). Finally, from 100–200 were found 20 Apr–7 May at Bobolink WPA *Kossuth* (MCK, DH) [ties second latest].

**Snow Bunting:** After an excellent winter season for this species, only one spring report was submitted: a single 9 Mar *Hamilton* (SJD). I suspect weather conditions kept birders from loitering along country roadsides observing birds that were in fact present.



**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** The first arrivals were 22 Apr at Solon *Johnson* (Richard Lynch), 23 Apr at Bacon Cr P *Woodbury* (Jerry Probst), and 23 Apr at Jim Fuller's house *Johnson*. Twenty-three on 13 May in a *Dickinson* backyard (ETH) were the most reported.

**Blue Grosbeak:** Oddly, they arrived very early in central Iowa: 3 May at Ames *Story* (SJD), 2 on 3 May *Warren* (AMJ), and 3 May at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (RLC, TJ) [all tie second earliest]; and 4 May at Marshalltown *Marshall* (MPr) [third earliest]. Two singing males at Carroll *Carroll* 22 May were also east of their usual range (RTh).

**LAZULI BUNTING:** A male was photographed 14 and 15 May at Carroll *Carroll* (\*Shirley Schirck), and another was at Sioux Center *Sioux* 26 and 28 May (\*JVD).

**Indigo Bunting:** The first were 2 on 26 Apr at Stephens SF *Lucas* (AB), and the next was at Burr Oak *Winneshiek* 1 May (Lee Zieke fide DC).

**PAINTED BUNTING:** The famous Brookside P *Story* Painted Bunting returned 5 May (m.ob.).

**Dickcissel:** First, all 6 May: 3 at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), Neal Smith NWR *Jasper* (KVS), and Dean *Appanoose* (DT).

**Bobolink:** The first were 4 on 21 Apr *Decatur* (NJM) [record early], 23 Apr *Clarke* (AB) [ties second earliest], and 5 on 26 Apr *Monroe* (JG).

**Eastern Meadowlark:** Some of 40 meadowlarks 1 Mar *Appanoose* were singing Easterns (RLC), and 3 were singing 2 Mar *Decatur* (NJM).

**Western Meadowlark:** At least one Western had migrated east to Cone M *Louis* by 22 Mar (DP).

**Yellow-headed Blackbird:** First: 2 on 9 Apr at Tannery Ponds *Woodbury* (POR) and 11 Apr at Rapp P *Page* (KDy).

**Rusty Blackbird:** Early migrants included 30 on 2 Mar at Bronson *Woodbury* (TLu) and 3 on 2 Mar at Charles City *Floyd* (PH). Most: 100 on 29 Mar at Myre Sl *Winnnebago* (JB) and 500 on 9 Apr at Cumming Wetlands *Warren* (JG), although other large flocks were in the 40–70 range. Last: 11 on 19 Apr at Dunbar Sl *Greene* (POR), and singles 25 Apr at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and 27 Apr at Mallard M *Cerro Gordo* (JHW).

**Brewer's Blackbird:** First: 22 Mar at Rathbun WA *Lucas* (JG), 4 on 22 Mar at Riverton WA *Fremont* (KDy), and 10 on 24 Mar at Lakin Sl *Guthrie* (AB). Most: 55 on 27 Mar *Muscataine* (BSc) and 85 on 12 Apr at Moeckley Pr *Polk* (SJD). Last: 12 on 22 Apr *Floyd* (PH), 13 on 22 Apr at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF), and 25 Apr *Warren* (AB).

**Great-tailed Grackle:** Most: 370 on 17 Mar (AB) and 437 on 23 Mar (JG), both *Warren*, would seem to be dispersal from the Des Moines *Polk* winter roost, whereas 20 on 7 Apr at Otter Cr M *Tama* (Kevin Holm fide HZ) would be an influx of spring migrants. They were seen to the northern tier *Dickinson*, *Kossuth*, and *Mitchell* (SJD, MCK, JHW), and east to South Sycamore Bottoms *Johnson* (BSc, JLF, DP, KL).

**Orchard Oriole:** The first were 22 Apr at Croton Unit *Lee* (CF) [second earliest] and 30 Apr at Burr Oak *Winneshiek* (Lee Zieke fide DC).

**Baltimore Oriole:** First, all 25 Apr: Ames *Story* (SJD), Coralville *Johnson* (Jill Beckman), and *Decatur* (NJM).

**SCOTT'S ORIOLE:** A male, Iowa's first, appeared in the yard of Mary Balch near Ft. Defiance SP *Emmet* 7 Apr. It fed and rested through some unusual weather for a Scott's Oriole, and then departed the morning of 14 Apr. (\*Mary Balch, \*POR, \*TLu, \*CJC, \*RIA, \*PHA, \*AMJ, \*JLF, JG-photo)

**Purple Finch:** Up to 16 visited feeders during migration from *Sioux* (JVD) to *Scott* (WMZ), except for Adel *Dallas*, where Tom Lawson hosted up to 43 on 11 Apr. Last: 2 on 13 May at Ankeny *Polk* (RIC), 15 May at an Ames *Story* feeder (SJD) [ties third latest], and 20 May at the feeders of Springbrook SP *Guthrie* (MTW) [record latest]

**Red Crossbill:** All: 22 Mar at Pierce Cr *Page* (KDY), 2 on 2 Apr at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK), 7 on 9 May *Marshall* (Greg Twedt fide SJD), and up to 15 visiting a feeder through the period at Cherokee *Cherokee* (DB).

**Common Redpoll:** All: 13 Mar at Jer-

ry Probst's feeders *Woodbury* (TLu), 2 on 18 Mar at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (CJF), 29 and 30 Mar at Adel *Dallas* (TL), and 11 and 12 Apr at another *Woodbury* feeder (GLV).

**Pine Siskin:** Many lingered late: up to 15 at *Scott* feeders until 23 May (WMZ), 1–5 at *Woodbury* feeders until 26 May (GLV, POR), 26 May at Liscomb *Marshall* (MPR), 2 on 27 May at Brookside P *Story* (SSP), at least 3 through the period at Cedar Rapids *Linn* feeders (DP), and 4 through the period at West Des Moines *Polk* (SAS).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** This species is now a yard bird for Chris Edwards *Johnson*: 26–31 May.

## COMMENT

The extent of observer coverage of spring migration remained steady from that of recent years. In fact, the nine counties with the most submitted bird sightings this year (Polk, Johnson, Story, Woodbury, Boone, Fremont, Decatur, Appanoose, Kossuth) are the same as those in 2007, and, with the exception of Polk overtaking Johnson for first place, they remain in exactly the same order. In an effort to gauge where coverage is thinnest, I looked for counties that had fewer than ten reports entered for the season. Four areas of the state stood out as the least birded: two in regions with less population (1) an eight-county area in the westcentral and southwest and (2) a seven-county area in the northwest; and two areas where birders get pulled in other directions (1) a four-county area in the eastern “nose” of the state and (2) a seven-county area from Humboldt/Webster to Butler/Grundy. So many birds, so little time.

An examination of the peak days for bird reports this spring reinforces the connection between weekends, weather, and bird records. Three weekends accounted for six of the “Top Twelve” birding days: 26–27 April (355 records) were dry and preceded by fallout-inducing storms, 3–4 May (303 records) were fine for searching out the first warblers of spring, and 17–18 May (251 records) were also dry, a condition not easily found this season. A May weekend with some rain, 10–11 May (165 records), suffers in comparison and more closely matches 12–13 Apr (162 records), with its migrant fallout and Scott's Oriole pilgrimages, and 19–20 April (159 records). Even the relatively warm weekend of 1–2 Mar teased birders into submitting 156 records. The seventh through the tenth days with the most submitted records were dry weekdays between 5 and 13 May, with 104–121 records. Surprisingly, Saturday 31 May was the fourth “birdiest” day of the season (129 records), another sign that migration was still very active at that late date.

More than 5,100 bird sightings went into the database from which this report was compiled. Thank you to Ann Johnson, IOU webmaster, whose strenuous efforts to battle Internet gremlins as the season wound down kept this report from becoming a mere shad-

ow of what is today. Thanks, of course, to all the contributors for sharing the results of their interest in Iowa's bird life; without you this report would likewise be a mere shadow. And a special thank you goes to those who calmly and patiently suffered data-entry problems while we scrambled backstage. All's well that ends well!

## CONTRIBUTORS

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|                     |         |                  |                      |         |                    |
|---------------------|---------|------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------|
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CONTRIBUTORS (continued)

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| Rob Thelen           | RTh | Carroll      | Matt Wetrich       | MTW | Jefferson  |
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Long-tailed Duck near Credit Island Park, Scott, 29 March 2008. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.



Cooper's Hawk sitting in a shrub right next to the road at a house in downtown Knoxville, Marion, 20 April 2008. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.

*Two out of five Long-eared Owls in Jay's friend's backyard, Dallas, 4 March 2008. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.*



*Willet, at Harrier Marsh, Boone, 27 April 2008. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.*



*One of three Western Kingbirds seen on this day at the state capitol complex in Des Moines, Polk, 4 May 2008. Photograph by Jay Gilliam, Norwalk, IA.*



*This White-winged Dove spent a few days in Adel, Dallas, June 2008. Photograph by Tom Lawson, Adel, IA.*



*Red-necked Grebe, Swan Lake State Park, Carroll, 19 April 2008. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA.*



*Broad-winged Hawk, Swan Lake State Park, Carroll, 18 April 2008. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA.*



*Black-billed Cuckoo, Hancock, 5 June 2008. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA.*



*Yellow-throated Warbler in Jim Scheib's yard in Iowa City, Johnson, 14 May 2008. Photograph by Jim Scheib, Iowa City, IA.*



*Canada Warbler, Woodbury, 20 May 2008. Photograph by Paul Roisen, Sioux City, IA.*



*Least Bittern at Iowa City Water Works Prairie Park, Johnson, 20 May 2008. Photograph by Jim Scheib, Iowa City, IA.*



*Marsh Wren, Harrier Marsh, Ogden, Boone, 18 May 2008. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*



*American Bittern, Harrier Marsh, Ogden, Boone, 17 May 2008. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.*



*Golden-winged Warbler, Hottes Lake, Dickinson, 20 May 2008. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*





*Hermit Thrush, South Sycamore Bottoms, Johnson, 6 April 2008. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*



*American Redstart, Hottes Lake, Dickinson, 20 May 2008. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*



*Hooded Warbler, Lake Macbride State Park, Johnson, 10 May 2008. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.*

# Records Committee Report for 2007

*Ann M. Johnson*

The year 2007 looked as if it was about to break the trend of adding new species to the state checklist and then came late fall. For the third year in a row, three new species were added. While scouting for the fall IOU meeting in late October, Steve Dinsmore picked out a Cave Swallow (#417) in the flocks of migrating swallows at Saylorville Reservoir. Three weeks later, Steve added Black-tailed Gull (#418), again at Saylorville Reservoir, which caused quite a rush to the lake by birders from all over the Midwest. While the chase for the gull continued, Mary Ann Gregory happened upon Iowa's first record of a wandering Fork-tailed Flycatcher (#419) and the path between Polk and Tama Counties became very busy. The last two species were well photographed by many. A total of 66 new reports as well as twelve old reports, many of newly discovered museum specimens, was reviewed during the year. Many other documentations were reviewed by the seasonal field reports editors for supporting evidence of reported observations. The committee thanks everyone for timely submission of reports so that our publications offer the most current information available on Iowa avian populations.

Committee members for 2007 with years in which their terms expire were Mike Overton (2007), Aaron Brees (2008), Matt Kenne (2009), Paul Hertzell (2010), Stephen J. Dinsmore (2011), Rita Goranson (2012) and Ann Johnson (secretary, appointed by the committee). Ross Silcock was nominated by the committee and subsequently appointed by the Board of Directors to fill a regular term beginning in 2008.

The following status changes were approved by the committee at its annual meeting on 28 October 2007: Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, accidental to casual; Red Knot, casual to regular; and Evening Grosbeak, casual to accidental. While the first two species have been recorded more regularly in the past few years, Evening Grosbeak has not been recorded in Iowa since 1998. Although the status of Ferruginous Hawk and Black-headed Gull remains regular by the number of reports over the past ten years, this status continues based on regular and specific locations. Reports of the gull seen away from the Spirit Lake area and all Ferruginous Hawk records should still include documentation or detailed notes to be considered for inclusion in the published literature.

Each record reviewed by the Records Committee is assigned a six-digit number (year and sequence number), which is included in this report for future reference. Records are classified as follows: A = Accepted (-S = specimen, -P = photograph, -R = recording, -D = documentation) and NA = Not Accepted. To be accepted, a record must receive seven votes on the initial review or six votes on a subsequent review. The subcategories A-S, A-P, and A-R indicate that physical evidence supports the identification, and records are subclassified based on a majority vote. References to *Iowa Bird Life* (IBL) are the page of the field report, a photo, or a special note in IBL where the record is cited. Published notes and previous citations may contain more details. An \* indicates a previously uncited documentation.

In the past, a separate photo file was maintained by the Records Committee. With the

proliferation of digital images being submitted, as well as documentations having unique identification numbers, these photos are now being archived as a part of the documentation and are not assigned a separate number. The classification in the entries below will indicate the presence of an identifiable photo with the record.

A number of significant records that would add to our knowledge of Iowa birds are unfortunately missed each year. Good photos should at least have some minimal details entered to identify who, what, when, and where. As can be seen below in the summary for 2007, photographic evidence is much easier to evaluate. Written documentations are more difficult and, as a lower level of evidence, require more detail and logic to be accepted for use by future researchers. The committee relies on the observer to paint a picture with words of what was seen and how it was identified. This is seldom available from listserv posts or brief details submitted with seasonal field reports. A few documented details on size and structure, along with a description of what was seen and consideration of any similar species, can make all the difference between an accepted and not accepted report. The committee can only evaluate the evidence that is submitted.

#### 2007 RECORDS ACCEPTED

**Black-bellied Whistling-Duck:** 6 May at L Manawa *Pottawattamie* (2007-32, A-P, IBL 77:110) and 27 May to 4 Jun near Mt. Pleasant *Henry* (2007-30, A-P, IBL 77:110).

**Harlequin Duck:** 10 Feb to 5 Apr at L&D 14 *Scott* (2007-03, A-P, IBL 77:65, 74; 77(3) cover [Robinson 2007]).

**Barrow's Goldeneye:** 11 Jan near Lamoni *Decatur* (2007-05, A-D, IBL 77:65 [Livingston 2007]).

**Greater Prairie-Chicken:** 19 May near Akron *Plymouth* (2007-20, A-D, IBL 77:112).

**Yellow-billed Loon:** 28 to 30 Nov at Saylorville Res *Polk* (2007-58, A-P, IBL 78:22 [Dinsmore 2008]).

**Brown Pelican:** 18 to 19 Dec at Fort Madison *Lee* (2007-65, A-P, IBL 78:68, 78(2) back cover).

**Neotropic Cormorant:** 6 Jun to 1 Jul at Sedan Bottoms *Appanoose* (2007-34, A-D, IBL 77:163 [Cummins and Johnson 2007]).

**Magnificent Frigatebird:** 2 to 3 Sep at Spirit L *Dickinson* (2007-41, A-P, IBL 78:22 [Dinsmore and Gilliam 2008]).

**Tricolored Heron:** 2 to 5 Aug at Rapp P *Page* (2007-37, A-P, IBL 78:23 [Dyche 2008]).

**Glossy Ibis:** 7 to 8 May at Moeckley Pr *Polk* (2007-15, A-P, IBL 77:113 [Brees 2007]) and 12 to 16 May at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (2007-17, A-P, IBL 77:113).

**Wood Stork:** 3 to 7 Oct at Jester P *Polk* (2007-45, A-P, IBL 78:23 [Brees 2008]).

**Black Vulture:** 3 to 4 Oct at Jester P *Polk* (2007-46, A-P, IBL 78:23 [Allen 2008]).

**Ferruginous Hawk:** 9 Dec at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (2007-62, A-D, \*Mark Orsag).

**Gyrfalcon:** 28 Jan to 5 Feb near Luther *Boone* (2007-02, A-P, IBL 77:67, 74).

**King Rail:** 8 May at Blue Flag Wetlands *Warren* (2007-25, A-D, IBL 77:115).

**Whimbrel:** 15 to 17 Apr at Coralville Res *Johnson* (2007-23, A-D, IBL 77:116) and 8 Aug at Spirit L *Dickinson* (2007-39, A-P, IBL 78:25).

**Red Knot:** 4 Aug at Pinchey Bottoms *Marion* (2007-38, A-P, IBL 78:25) and 2 to 4 Sep at Diamond L *Dickinson* (2007-53, A-P, IBL 78:25).

**Red Phalarope:** 18 to 19 Sep at Say-

lorville R *Polk* (2007-44, A-P, IBL 78:27,37) and 20 Oct at Saylorville R *Polk* (2007-55, A-D, IBL 78:27).

**Laughing Gull:** 18 Aug at Spirit L *Dickinson* (2007-59, A-P, IBL 78:27) and 6 Oct at Red Rock R *Marion* (2007-47, A-P, IBL 78:27,38).

**Little Gull:** 2 to 6 Sep at Welch L *Dickinson*, A-P, (2007-40, IBL 78:27).

**Mew Gull:** 18 Nov to 2 Dec at Red Rock R *Marion* (2007-57, A-P, IBL 78:27, 39, 70).

**Black-tailed Gull:** 17 Nov to 6 Dec at Saylorville R. in *Polk* (2007-50, A-P, IBL 78:27, 70; 78(1) cover [Dinsmore 2008]).

**California Gull:** 20 Jun at Meinking M *Dickinson* (2007-35, A-P, IBL 77:166).

**Iceland Gull:** 16 Jan to 27 Feb at L&D 15 *Scott* (2007-06, A-P, IBL 77:68); 2 to 4 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (2007-09, A-D, IBL 77:118); 6 Dec Des Moines *Polk* (2007-60, A-P, IBL 78:70,76); and 15 Dec at Red Rock Res *Marion* (2007-64, A-P, IBL 78:70).

**Great Black-backed Gull:** 10 to 17 Mar at L&D 14 *Scott* (2007-10, A-P, IBL 77:118); 11 to 13 Mar at Pool 15 *Scott* (2007-11, A-D, IBL 77:118); and 23 Mar *Scott* (2007-12, A-D, IBL 76:142).

**Black-legged Kittiwake:** 1 to 14 Jan at Saylorville Res *Polk* (2007-01, A-P, IBL 77:68, 75); 17 to 21 Oct at L. Manawa *Pottawattamie* (2007-48, A-P, IBL 78:28); and 8 Dec at Red Rock Res *Marion* (2007-61, A-P, IBL 78:70).

**Long-tailed Jaeger:** 11 Sep at Saylorville Res *Polk* (2007-54, A-D, IBL 78:28, [Dinsmore 2008]).

**Jaeger sp:** 19 Nov near Iowa Falls *Hardin* (2007-51, A-P, IBL 78:28, \*Tom Schilke).

**White-winged Dove:** 19 Apr to 14 May at Johnston *Polk* (2007-14, A-P, IBL 77:118, 136) and 26 Jun at Ida Grove *Ida* (2007-33, A-P, IBL 77:167).

**Rufous Hummingbird:** 27 to 28 Jul near Ledges SP *Boone* (2007-36, A-P, IBL 77:167, 175).

**Fork-tailed Flycatcher:** 20 to 23 Nov near Clutier *Tama* (2007-52, A-P, IBL 78:29, 78(1) back cover [Gregory and Johnson 2008]).

**Clark's Nutcracker:** 16 Sep near Jefferson *Greene* (2007-43, A-D, IBL 78:30 [Zaletel 2008]).

**Raven sp:** 9 Nov at Hitchcock NA *Pottawattamie* (2007-49, A-D, IBL 78:30, \*Eliot Bedows).

**Cave Swallow:** 26 Oct at Saylorville Res in *Polk* (2007-56, A-D, IBL 78:30 [Dinsmore 2008]).

**Rock Wren:** 1 May near Red Oak *Montgomery* (2007-08, A-D, IBL 77:121).

**Bewick's Wren:** 9 to 14 May near Booneville *Madison* (2007-22, A-P, IBL 77:121, 136).

**Prairie Warbler:** 7 May to 20 Jun at Pleasant Creek RA *Linn* (2007-16, A-P, IBL 77:124, 169), 14 May at Geode SP *Henry* (2007-18, A-P, IBL 77:124), and 4 May at Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (2007-31, A-P, IBL 77:124).

**Western Tanager:** 20 May at Oak Grove Park *Sioux* (2007-21, A-D, IBL 77:126) and 16 May near Ruthven *Palo Alto* (2007-27, A-P, IBL 77:126).

**Painted Bunting:** 8 May to 21 Jul at Ames *Story* (2007-19, A-P, IBL 77:127, 171).

**Eurasian Tree Sparrow:** 20 Dec near St. Anthony *Marshall* (2007-66, A-P, \*Carl Kurtz).

#### 2007 RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED

**White-tailed Kite:** An unlikely winter date with some conflicting details resulted in the committee feeling that Krider's red-tailed or even a male Northern Harrier had not been adequately eliminated (2007-04).

**Black Phoebe:** A bird seen from a slowly moving vehicle without aid of optics was described well but the situation was problematic for a first record and left room for reasonable doubt (2007-42).

**Glossy Ibis:** While some features were suggestive of this species, there was a not enough detail to eliminate a basic plumaged White-faced Ibis or even a hybrid (2007-24).

**Ferruginous Hawk:** This is a species that is difficult to evaluate from a written documentation without clear descriptions of various characteristics as well as aging of the bird. The committee struggled with one report of a bird described with some suggestion of this species but not enough detail to absolutely eliminate a Red-tailed Hawk (2007-29). Another report described a bird that may have been a more likely Krider's red-tailed (2007-06).

**Prairie Falcon:** On a split vote, it was determined that a few inconsistencies and lack of critical detail did not overcome the salient characteristics described (2007-28).

**Snowy Plover:** Although this species has been reported more frequently in recent years, it is still a very rare migrant in Iowa and requires a more detailed description than was provided to stand alone as evidence (2007-26).

**Whimbrel:** A Whimbrel seen in the middle of the Mississippi River was finally determined to be barely into Illinois (2007-13).

**Long-tailed Jaeger:** A photo of a bird silhouetted against a bright sky could not be determined to be this species, but the record was subsequently accepted as *Jaeger* sp (2007-51, IBL 78:28)

**Common Raven:** For years a raven seen in Iowa was presumed to be a Common Raven, the difficulty being separation from American Crow. With the influx into

the state of species from the southwest, most notably Black-bellied Whistling-Duck and White-winged Dove, Chihuahuan Raven must now be considered as well. This bird seen from the Hitchcock Hawk Watch was accepted as *Raven* sp (2007-49, IBL 78:30). Another report (2007-63) of a brief view of a bird in flight was lacking enough details to be certain it was not a large crow.

#### OLD RECORDS REVIEWED FOR THE FIRST TIME AND ACCEPTED

The discovery of an egg collection from Iowa that had been transferred to the Peabody Museum at Yale University led to research by Matt Kenne of the following early records for the state based on material in a number of museums around the country.

**Western Grebe:** 9 Jun 1924 at Eagle L. *Hancock* (2007-AC, A-S, first record, \*Ralph Handsaker).

**Swallow-tailed Kite:** 8 May 1878 *Black Hawk* (2007-AG, A-S, nest record, \*E. Ricksecker).

**Whooping Crane:** 10 Jun 1881 at Iowa City *Johnson* (2007-AL, A-S, nest record, \*A.K. Fairchild).

**Ruddy Turnstone:** 25 May 1878 at Storm Lake *Buena Vista* (2007-AF, A-S, first record, \*Bond).

**Dunlin:** 18 Nov 1885 at Storm Lake *Buena Vista* (2007-AH, A-S, first record, \*Bond).

**Passenger Pigeon:** May 1882 at Dubuque *Dubuque* (2007-AD, A-S, nest record, \*Fred Brown).

**Passenger Pigeon:** 27 May 1877 at Muscatine *Muscatine* (2007-AE, A-S, nest record, \*C. N. Page).

**White-eyed Vireo:** 17 May 1896 *Van Buren* (2007-AK, A-S, first specimen, \*Savage).

**Worm-eating Warbler:** 8 May 1897

at Hillsboro *Van Buren* (2007-AI, A-S, first specimen, \*Savage).

**Smith's Longspur:** 3 May 1870 at Lake Mills *Winnebago* (2007-AJ, A-S, first record, \* John Krider).

#### OLD RECORDS REVIEWED FOR THE FIRST TIME AND NOT ACCEPTED

**Black Vulture:** A two-year-old report written from memory because the original field notes were unavailable may have been

this species but might also have been a juvenile Turkey Vulture (2007-AB).

#### OLD RECORDS RE-REVIEWED AND NOT ACCEPTED

**Eurasian Wigeon:** A previous review of this sighting resulted in a not accepted report because the description was lacking detail. This second description provided more detail but a hybrid American/Eurasian Wigeon could not be ruled out (2007-AA).

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I thank Paul Hertzell for checking all of the inclusive dates against field reports data so that this report is an accurate representation of rare bird sightings in Iowa.

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# Eskimo Curlew Records from Iowa

Thomas H. Kent

In recent years, some museums have digitized their catalogs of bird specimens and made them available on-line. While surfing the Web for specimens of rare birds from Iowa, Matt Kenne rediscovered at the University of Michigan's Museum of Zoology a long-missing specimen of Eskimo Curlew taken by Paul Bartsch at Burlington, Des Moines Co., Iowa in 1893. He shared this information with me and Jim Dinsmore, correcting our statement in *Birds in Iowa* about the missing specimen (Kent and Dinsmore 1996). The mysterious story of the Bartsch specimen prompted this report. Another University of Iowa specimen, unlabeled, taken by Frank Bond, added to the confusion.

I also found that there was no one source that included all of the known reports of Eskimo Curlew in Iowa. Before listing all of the published occurrences that I have found and discussing the Bartsch and Bond specimens, let me paraphrase some basic information from Jim Dinsmore's well detailed article on the curlew (Dinsmore 1988).

Eskimo Curlew is quite similar to Little Curlew of the Old World and a bit easier to tell from Whimbrel. Field marks in favor of Eskimo Curlew include unbarred underside of primaries, pale cinnamon wing linings, missing or indistinct stripe on top of head, and pink base to lower mandible for less than half its length. Eskimo Curlew is known for its intermingling with American Golden-Plover in their circular migration route up the center of North America to breeding grounds in the Arctic and then east to Labrador to fatten before trans-Atlantic flight to South America as far south as Argentina. In some years, storms carried birds west to New England, where they were slaughtered. Eskimo Curlew populations underwent a rapid decline from the mid-1800s to 1900. The decline was noticeable in the 1875–1880 period, which was before major market hunting peaked in the 1880s (Banks 1977). Scattered reports of Eskimo Curlew continue, so it cannot be declared extinct (Dinsmore 1988, Eve Iverson pers. com.).

The reports of Eskimo Curlew in Iowa are scant and incomplete. Those listed below have at least some information on numbers, location, date, and observers. Those with dates are from April or May. The disappearance of Eskimo Curlew occurred at a time in the late 1800s when northern and western Iowa were incompletely settled. The bulk of the Eskimo Curlews and American Golden-Plovers migrated through the prairie states and provinces west of Iowa.

The following reports are listed in chronological order with first references and some supporting references. In Literature Cited I have listed the records (by number or letter) covered by each paper. I have not included mention of Eskimo Curlew on state lists or other general articles with vague reference to Iowa.

1. 1,000s, northwestern Iowa, May 1866, John G. Smith (Hough 1901, Dinsmore 1994, Kent and Dinsmore 1996).
2. Great flocks, northwestern Iowa, ca 1870, Smith (Anon 1910).

3. Specimens at Putnam Museum, Davenport: male No. 266.1 and female No. 266.2, both northern Iowa, 20 April 1874, S. G. Bowman (Hahn 1963). DuMont (1933a) listed only one female specimen No. 10158 at the Putnam Museum with the same data.
4. Two shot by B. E. B. Kennedy along Mosquito Creek in southwestern Pottawattamie Co. on 23 April 1874 (Anon 1874). These were taken as part of The Spring Hunt by the Sportsmen's Club. The same day, 89 Eskimo Curlews were taken in Nebraska. The Omaha-based hunts were noted by newspapers from 1858 to 1887 (Ducey 2003) without mention of other Iowa records of Eskimo Curlew.
5. Mounted specimen, Johnson Co., ca 1876–1885, Frank Bond (see text, Nutting 1893, Anderson 1907, Hahn 1963).
6. 12–15 killed in lifetime, Spirit Lake area, after 1881, Dick Harker (Musgrove 1945, Dinsmore 1994).
7. Great numbers mingling with golden-plover, Fort Dodge area, ca 1881, Dr. N. (Hapgood 1881).
8. Almost gone, Manson region, by 1889 (H. A. K. 1889, Dinsmore 1994). Hunters receive ten cents apiece for dow [sic] birds (H. A. K. 1889).
9. Pair shot, Des Moines, Polk Co., ca 1893, C. H. Schroeder, specimens donated to Iowa State Historical Society not found by DuMont (1931, 1933a).
10. Skin, Burlington, 5 April 1893, Paul Bartsch (Anderson 1907, Kent and Dinsmore 1996, see text).
11. Specimens from Grinnell at Harvard University (#301739 female, #30740 female, #328584 male), 10 April 1900, M. A. Frazer (Hahn 1963, Dinsmore et al. 1984, Kent and Dinsmore 1996).
12. One female taken, Davenport, 3 May 1901, Charleston Museum (Hodges 1950, Hahn 1963, Dinsmore 1994).

In addition to the 12 reports above, there are some less specific references about the occurrence of Eskimo Curlew in Iowa.

- A. J. A. Allen (1870), a famous ornithologist, visited western Iowa in the summer of 1867. He was asked by the state geologist to provide a catalog of Iowa birds. Eskimo Curlew is included in this list of potential Iowa birds (Anderson 1907).
- B. Anderson (1907) surveyed Iowa birders about species on a list. W. G. Savage, a farmer in Van Buren County, responded “spring migrant, very rare.” I did not find any mention of Eskimo Curlew in the extensive records of Savage (Kent 2000).
- C. Also responding to Anderson (1907), Harold Giddings, a farmer in Jackson County, responded “rare transient.” I did not find any mention of Eskimo Curlew in the extensive records of Giddings (Kent 2002).
- D. John Krider (1879) recalled from memory his collecting trips to Hancock County, “Esquimaux Curlew...I have found it in Iowa in May, migrating westward” (Anderson 1907). William Brewster (1882), a noted ornithologist, in a review of Krider's book wrote, in part, “Important records are given without dates and often with only vague or only inferential assignment of locality, while improbable



statements and palpable errors are of frequent occurrence. In short, it is only too evident that Mr. Krider's 'Notes' are the offspring of a failing memory rather than the carefully kept data of a systematic worker."

- E. Abe Dakota (1878) "killed forty plover, one curlew" on 27 April 1878 at Pomeroy, Calhoun County. A curlew traveling with American Golden-Plover at this date in northcentral Iowa would most likely be an Eskimo Curlew.
- F. A guide to hunting sites lists Lake Mills in northcentral Iowa as a place where one could hunt curlews but no other details are given (Hallock 1877, Dinsmore 1988).
- G. DuMont (1933b) saw a mounted specimen in the museum at Iowa Wesleyan College at Mt. Pleasant. No data were available for this specimen.

#### ESKIMO CURLEW SPECIMEN MYSTERIES

As mentioned above, Matt Kenne discovered a here-to-fore missing Eskimo Curlew specimen that had been at the University of Iowa, but now is at the University of Michigan's Museum of Zoology. It had been collected by Paul Bartsch at Burlington, Iowa, on 5 April 1893 (Kent and Dinsmore 1996). Another specimen had been at the University of Iowa (Nutting 1893) and subsequently was missing (DuMont 1933a, Dinsmore et al. 1984). This latter record was not listed by Kent and Dinsmore (1996), because it was missing and lacked data. A mounted specimen that is in the Biosphere Discovery Hub at the University of Iowa is likely this bird, which I will call the "Bond Curlew."

#### Bond Curlew

The first mention of the "Bond" curlew (Figure 1) is from Nutting (1893) in his Report of the Committee on State Fauna: "The following species are for the first time reported from Iowa: ..."*Numenius borealis* (Forst). Eskimo Curlew. Johnson County, Iowa. Frank Bond. Specimens at University museum."

Frank Bond and his twin brother Fred grew up on a farm in Johnson County. After college (Frank, B.S. 1880, A.M. 1884), they donated about 500 specimens to University of Iowa (Palmer 1944). I only found 39 Iowa Bond specimens in the computer catalog at the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, but there may be others that were not entered. According to George



Figure 1. The Bond specimen of Eskimo Curlew.

Schrimper (former curator of the museum, pers comm), specimens that were mounted were often not cataloged into the study skin collection. Nutting gives no data for the Bond specimen. Nutting arrived at the university in 1886 after Bond was gone. The labels on other Bond specimens do not give dates or locations, although most, if not all, of the Iowa specimens were likely from Johnson County in the time period 1875 to 1884 (not ca 1892 as listed in Dinsmore et. al. 1984). It is not clear why Nutting referred to the specimens as plural.

Bartsch (1899), Anderson (1907), and DuMont (1933a) repeat the Nutting citation. All were at the university, but only DuMont mentions looking for the specimen. The specimens in the Science Building (now Calvin Hall) may have been inaccessible to Anderson while the building was being moved. Dayton Stoner observed the unlabeled specimen and the Bartsch-labeled specimen at the museum (letter to Charles R. Keyes, 31 October 1910). DuMont adds, "The specimen taken by Bartsch is now mounted in the University of Iowa Museum, but those taken by Bond cannot be found." This statement contradicts current opinion—the unmounted specimen now at the University of Michigan bears a Bartsch label, and the unlabeled mounted specimen at the University of Iowa seems likely to be a Bond specimen. George Schrimper (pers comm) recalls the various locations where the mounted specimen was exhibited over the last fifty years. It is now in the "Nature's Bounty" exhibit in the Biosphere Discovery Hub. No data were given in the previous display case (Cindy Opitz's notes), and it is not feasible to enter the current display case to look for a hidden label on the bird.

### **Bartsch Curlew**

The first mention of the "Bartsch" curlew (Figures 2 and 3) is from Anderson (1907): "Des Moines—Mus. No. 16803, taken at Burlington, April 5, 1893 by Paul Bartsch." The specimen catalog at the University of Iowa lists 16803 as a sponge. There is no entry in the catalog for 16303. Anderson received a Ph.D. degree from the University of Iowa in 1903 and was assistant in zoology from 1902 to 1906. He does not mention examining the specimen and may not have been able to while Science Hall was being moved to make room for the new museum building (later named Macbride Hall).

Nutting (1895) and Bartsch (1899) do not mention the Bartsch specimen, but Nutting was only reporting new species and Bartsch, in his complete bibliography of Iowa birds, did not include unpublished records, not even his own. How could DuMont confuse the Bond and Bartsch specimens, and how and when did the Bartsch specimen get to Michigan?

A backward approach is now in order. Matt Kenne found on the Web a specimen at the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology labeled, "Eskimo Curlew, Paul Bartsch, Burlington, Iowa 4–5–1893" (see Figure 3, photo by Janet Hinshaw). The specimen came to the University of Michigan in 1990 from the Walter Koelz estate a year after he died. There was no correspondence or other information about the specimen, which was given Michigan number 230993 (Hinshaw, pers comm). Koelz (1895–1989) had a Ph.D. in zoology and was connected with the University of Michigan for 74 years (obituary on Internet). Twenty specimens from the University of Michigan and/or Koelz that are now at the University of Iowa were presumably obtained by trades for specimens at Iowa. Although the Iowa

specimen accession log does not give dates of entry, the date of accessioning the Michigan specimens can be extrapolated from the collection dates for preceding and following entries.

One set of Michigan specimens was cataloged after 26 February 1930. The handwriting on the label of the Bartsch specimen matches that of Homer Dill, curator of the museum at Iowa. Others at the museum at that time period were Walter Thietje (Dill's assistant who arrived in 1929) (Schrimper 1982) and Phillip DuMont (hired by Dill part-time from the fall of 1932 to the fall of 1933 to rearrange the bird collection according to the A.O.U. Checklist) (Dinsmore 1987). In retrospect, it seems likely that the Bartsch specimen had been traded by the time

DuMont arrived to study the collection and that he mistook the mounted specimen for Bartsch's (unmounted) specimen. DuMont created a card catalog of specimens by species. The card for Eskimo Curlew in "Card File on Birds by DuMont Aug 24 1954 Obsolete" includes the Bartsch specimen #16303 and the presumed Bond specimen #21235 with comments. "21235: As this skin has not been located in the collection, it was the opinion of Professor Nutting that it went to pieces from Grease Burning." And "21235: This mounted specimen was remounted from the old mounted specimen."

Walter Koelz had a loose association with the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology and traveled extensively in Asia, building extensive collections of art work and



Figure 2. The Bartsch specimen of Eskimo Curlew.

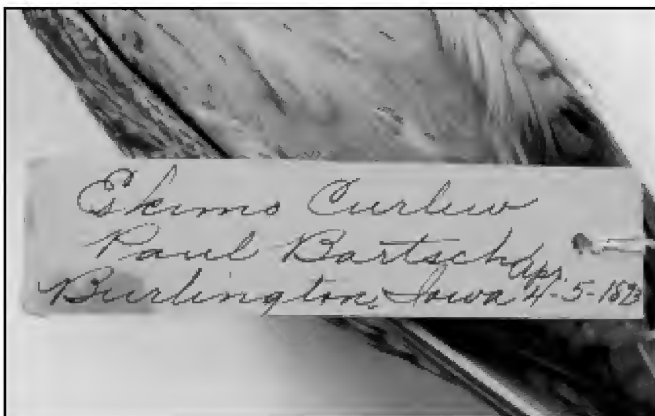


Figure 3. Label on the Bartsch specimen (currently at the University of Michigan).

biological specimens (Payne 2000). His bird collections were stored in his home and in private cabinets at the university. No written record of the bartering that must have taken place are preserved, if they ever existed. At that time (ca 1930) specimen exchanges were used to build displays and balance collections. If we could only talk to Homer Dill and Walter Koelz!

Sharing the curlew mysteries with me and providing prompt responses to my queries were Matt Kenne from Algona, one of Iowa's birders with the most curiosity, who started the process; Cindy Opitz, collection manager at the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, who gave me access to specimens, old records, and data bases; Janet Hinshaw, collection manager at the University of Michigan's Museum of Zoology, who searched for information at Michigan, photographed the Bartsch specimen, and provided references about Walter Koelz; Eve Iversen, new graduate student in geology, who shared past and recent research on Eskimo Curlews (Gollop, Barry, and Iversen 1986); and Jim Dinsmore, professor emeritus at Iowa State University, who provided helpful comments and references.

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## Scott's Oriole: First Iowa Record

Mary Balch and Ann M. Johnson

On 7 April 2008, it was cold and wet in Estherville with some snow still trying to hold on to the remnants of last summer's weeds. I glanced out the big window in the living room to check on my bird feeders and noticed what I thought was a Baltimore Oriole helping himself to some millet and sunflower seeds. He spooked easily and flew up into the pine trees that are close to the feeders. I sat quietly and waited and soon he came back to eat some more.

"Strange bird," I said to myself as I tried to sneak across the room to check out my bird books. He looks like an oriole but he's not quite right, and if he is a Baltimore Oriole he's at least six weeks early. He was a bright yellow bird, not the orange of the usual Baltimore, and had a black hood and black wings with a white bar. I could not find it in my bird book so, as a very amateur birdwatcher, I leaned on the great folks at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>. Within one hour this creature was identified as a Scott's Oriole, native to the western United States—California, Utah, Nevada, and Arizona (Figure 1).

This is the first time a Scott's Oriole has been seen in Iowa; poor little guy looked so lost. Well, with that ID, I got out the jelly feeder and orange halves. He didn't touch the grape jelly but he

sure put away orange halves. I would put out one and a half oranges each day and even bought the last mealworms at the local pet store (he really liked those). He squabbled with the pair of starlings that had decided to set up housekeeping nearby and backed a Red-bellied Woodpecker off his orange several times.

He stayed for about a week through rain and snow flurries, and when the weather improved off he went to parts unknown. I haven't seen him since then and I wonder where he went.

The very best part of this strange bird visitation was the wonderful group of people that traveled from all over Iowa to see this bird. They came in with cameras and binoculars, home-made jam, oranges, and books. What a wonderful treat it was for me to meet all of them. I hope the bird comes back next year!

Scott's Oriole breeds in the desert southwest as far north as Colorado. It is known to occasionally wander and has been recorded in our surrounding states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Nebraska. Very adventurous birds have been found as far away as Ontario and Georgia. Iowa's first record enjoyed the Balch feeding station in Emmet County from 7–14 April 2008 where food was plentiful during the early spring inclement weather.



*Figure 1. First Iowa record Scott's Oriole, Estherville, Emmet, 13 April 2008. Photograph by Ann M. Johnson, Norwalk, IA.*

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# Neotropic Cormorant in Fremont County

*Stephen J. Dinsmore*

On the afternoon of 3 May 2008, I was driving west on County Road J-46 from the town of Riverton in Fremont County. I crossed the west branch of the Nishnabotna River and spotted a small cormorant perched in a willow in a wet area along the south side of the road. My initial thought was that the bird was an American Coot because of the size and coloration, but as I passed the bird I realized it was a small cormorant. At 3:28 P.M. I stopped and quickly confirmed that the bird was indeed a Neotropic Cormorant (Figure 1). I was able to study and photograph the bird at close range until 3:50 P.M. when I had to depart the area.

The bird was clearly a cormorant because of its bill shape, generally brown coloration, general body shape, and large webbed feet. The bird's small size was evident and I estimated it was barely 50% larger than an American Coot by body size and clearly much smaller than nearby Double-crested Cormorants. Compared to a Double-crested Cormorant, it was proportionally long-tailed and short-billed and lacked an obvious pale upper breast. The dark bill was short (estimated as slightly less than the head length), fairly slender, and hooked at the tip. The gular pouch was dull orange, triangular shaped, and peaked



*Figure 1. Neotropic Cormorant, fourth Iowa record, Fremont, 3 May 2008. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*

posteriorly behind and below the eye. The rear portion was narrowly bordered dull white. The body was an even dull brown color and lacked an obvious pale upper breast. The large webbed feet were a distinct gray-black color. In flight I noted that the neck and tail projections were about equal and that the bird flew with very rapid, shallow wing beats. When it landed and fed with Double-crested Cormorants I again noted its small size, lower profile when swimming, and shorter, slimmer neck. On the basis of the plumage I concluded this was a first-year Neotropic Cormorant that had not yet reached full adult plumage. The bird was seen by many observers at this locale through 6 May.

This represents the fourth re-

cord of a Neotropic Cormorant for Iowa. Previous records include an adult on 4 May 1996 at Little River Recreation Area, Decatur Co. (Dinsmore 1997), an apparent adult on 19–20 November 2004 at Saylorville Reservoir, Polk Co. (Brees 2005), and a bird of unknown age from 6–29 June 2007 at Sedan Wildlife Area, Appanoose Co. (Cummins and Johnson 2007).

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## **Eurasian Wigeon at Swan Lake, Johnson County**

*James L. Fuller*

April 14 was a sunny spring morning, and I decided to check the south part of the Hawkeye Wildlife Area (WA) for waterfowl and new migrants. Arriving at the pullout along the east end of Swan Lake, it was evident there was a large concentration of waterfowl present. As I set out scoping, one of the first ducks noted was a wigeon with a reddish head featuring a wide gold stripe through the top of the crown, a male Eurasian Wigeon. After watching the bird for roughly two minutes, a flock of the waterfowl in the east end of the lake, including the wigeon got up and flew off to the north. Subsequently I searched the high waters of the Coralville Reservoir to the north of Swan Lake, and could not relocate the bird, nor could it be refound on Swan Lake when I returned about 45 minutes hence.

The general size of the wigeon was similar to most of the other waterfowl in the area, including American Wigeon, Gadwall, Lesser Scaup, and Northern Shoveler. It was generally larger than the American Coots, Blue-winged Teal, and Ruddy Ducks, and smaller than the Mallards. The most striking feature was the red head with its gold crown stripe. The head shape was rounded, and the bill was short and gray. Most of the body was light



gray, but the breast was a pinkish-orange, and the rump and folded wings were dark, with a white area in front of the dark rump, and a small white wing patch.

The most likely duck that this bird could be confused with is the American Wigeon with which it normally associates. Although male and female American Wigeons are about the same size and body shape, they have a reddish-orange body, and males show a green area on the side of the head with a white crown stripe, and females have a grayish head.

Eurasian Wigeon breeds in the north of Europe and Asia and in Iceland, and migrates south to winter in temperate regions. A few birds migrate to the east and west coasts of North America, but inland observations are relatively rare. Most inland records are from spring. With the exception of an October observation, all ten of the previous Iowa sightings were recorded in the spring, and all but one of those records was from March and April. Interestingly, this same Swan Lake location provided the lone February observation in 2002. All but one of the previous records from the state was of a single male, the exception being a pair at Cone Marsh in Louisa County. This is undoubtedly because the male is quite identifiable and the female is easily overlooked. There is no geographical pattern to the previous Iowa reports, as they are evenly scattered across the state.

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## Birding Delaware County

*Bill Scheible*

Whenever I host visitors from out of state, I usually take them on a day trip to northeastern Iowa to prove that our small square state is more than repetitive fields of row crops. The road from Cedar Rapids to the Mississippi River bluffs passes through Delaware County, but I had done very little birding there until recently, when I chose to pursue a County Big Year in seldom visited, rarely reported Delaware County. In so doing, I discovered several places unknown to me that have proven to be interesting, enjoyable, and lo and behold, even birdy at times.

Largely agricultural, **Delaware County** (Figure 1) is mostly flat in the south, becoming gradually hillier as one progresses toward northeastern Iowa's unglaciated driftless area. The Maquoketa River courses diagonally through the county from NW to SE. In the 2000 census, Delaware County had a population of about 18,400, virtually identical to that of one hundred years earlier. Clearly, this is not a center of burgeoning population growth. Manchester, the county seat, is home to 5,000 people and there are ten other towns, each

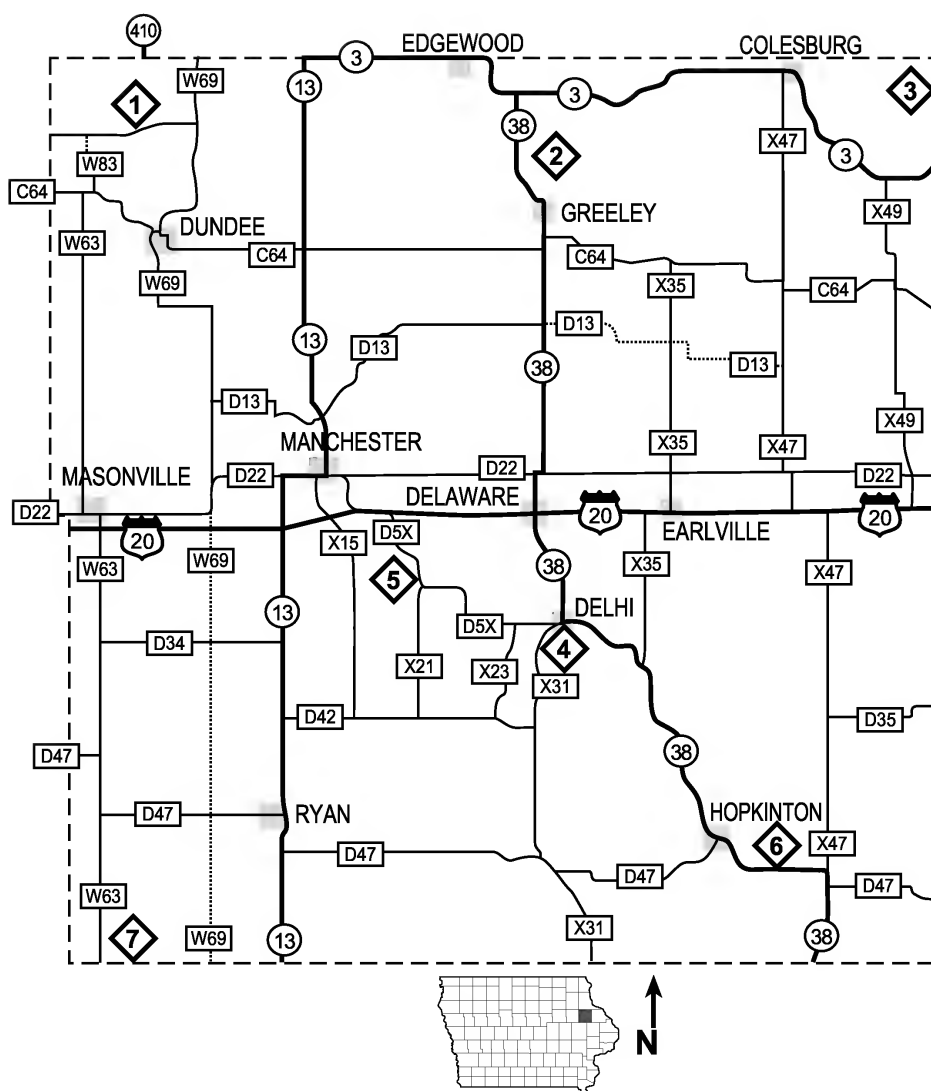


Figure 1. Birding Delaware County: (1) Backbone State Park, (2) Fountain Springs Park, (3) Ram Hollow Wildlife Management Area, (4) Delhi area, (5) Bailey's Ford Park, (6) Hopkinton area, (7) Buffalo Creek Wildlife Area.

of them with fewer than 1,000 citizens. The county is bisected into north and south by U.S. Highway 20 and east/west by state IA Highway 13, avenues that afford convenient access to its four corners.

Here follows a clockwise tour of selected Delaware County birding spots, from northwest to southwest. These areas are highlighted on Figure 1.

Tucked into the northwestern corner of the county, **Backbone State Park** (Figures 1.1 and 2) was Iowa's first state park, established in 1920. Its signature feature is "the backbone," a high rocky ridge enveloped by a sharp bend of the Maquoketa River. Largely mixed-hardwood forest, Backbone SP has several well-maintained trails but it can also be birded from the vicinity of the paved road that runs north/south through the upper half of the park. This portion of the park can be entered from the north from Strawberry Point or from east and west by way of County Road C57. It could be that this central road provides Iowans with the easiest access to nesting species such as Acadian Flycatcher, Veery, and Cerulean Warbler, all of which I've viewed while standing beside my car. Other species that can be found in proximity to the road are Wood Thrush, Carolina Wren, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Red-eyed Vireo, Northern Parula, and Scarlet Tanager. Yellow-throated Warbler is sometimes present just inside the east entrance and Red-shouldered Hawk can be heard, but seldom seen, at the west entrance near the Six Pines Campground. This entire area is a productive spot during spring and fall migration. East of the park along County Road C57, pasture on the north side of the road is home to Grasshopper Sparrow, Dickcissel, and an occasional Sedge Wren.

The lake at Backbone SP, a creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Depression, is primarily a recreational body of water. From a birder's perspective, it's impoverished. Below the spillway, though, there is very nice habitat along the road to South Lake Campground. Many of Iowa's summer resident species are present here, and this is a fairly good spot for spring migrants, too.

Backbone SP, by the way, is within Breeding Bird Atlas block No. 320. There are two nice campgrounds as well as several rental cabins at the state park.

**Fountain Springs Park** (Figure 1.2) is a 180-acre site in north-central Delaware County near the town of Greeley. The park features a trout stream, and walking the nearby trails can be rewarding. In addition to common woodland species, I have found Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Louisiana Waterthrush here in June.

**Ram Hollow Wildlife Management Area** (Figure 1.3) is a 480-acre DNR property located in the far northeastern corner of Delaware County. Hilly and heavily timbered, with rough trails, this is a physically challenging trip compared to other areas in the county. Just over the border from White Pine Hollow in Dubuque County, Ram Hollow would seem to be a location for Ruffed Grouse, although I've failed to find them in three trips here. Many hardwood-loving species can be found here, and I once had a 7-woodpecker day at Ram Hollow.

The **Delhi area** (Figure 1.4) provides another multifaceted birding area along the Maquoketa River. Like the impoundment at Backbone State Park, **Lake Delhi** serves humans well and birds poorly. However, at the southeastern edge of the town of Delhi is the 40-acre **Silver Lake**. When water levels are low, the north end of the lake, adjacent to IA Highway 38, has proven to be Delaware County's best location for migrating shorebirds (this is a severely mud-flat challenged county!). A variety of migrant waterfowl stop here as well, and twice it has afforded close up comparisons of Cackling vs. the resident Canada Geese. Southwest of Delhi, accessed by County Roads X21 or X29, is **Turtle Creek Park**, a 200-acre mixed use area. Local homeowners have placed gourd houses near the lakefront, and this is the only place in the county where I've found Purple Martins. The small lake

seldom offers much, though. I've not explored this area extensively, but it should be noted that Turtle Creek Park is included in Breeding Bird Atlas Block No. 324 and warrants further scrutiny.

**Bailey's Ford Park** (Figure 1.5), midway between Delhi and Manchester off County Road D5X, is probably my favorite birding spot in Delaware County, no doubt in part because of the bubbling, mood-leveling trout stream that meanders down its middle. Bailey's Ford can be a pretty good migrant trap and I've recorded 22 warbler species here (not all in one day, mind you). An extensive trail system departs from the campground in the northwest section of the park, across the stream, and the semi-open, mixed cedar/hardwood habitat here can be very productive for summering species as well as migrants. When snow blankets the ground up to the banks of the trout stream, this park is postcard worthy. It should house wintering Saw-whet and Long-eared Owls. It should, but I've yet to find them. There are three campgrounds at Bailey's Ford.

The **Hopkinton area** (Figure 1.6) is another good birding area. Along County Road X47, about four miles south of Highway 20 and five or six miles northeast of Hopkinton, there is a private park maintained by the Worthington Sportsmen's Club. Managed primarily for fishing, the spring-fed lake has consistently been my best spot for migrating waterfowl. An annual \$20.00 membership fee provides access to the property. Least Bittern and Sora are here, and it's the only place in Delaware County where I've seen a gull (Ring-billed) or a tern (Forster's)!

West of Hopkinton, Pheasant Road makes a loop with County Road D47. Hilly pastureland here is home to Grasshopper Sparrow and Bobolink and, to my knowledge, is the only Delaware County location for Henslow's Sparrow. Both Bell's Vireo and Orchard Oriole frequent this area.

Finishing up our tour, the **Buffalo Creek Wildlife Area** (Figure 1.7) is a nice upland habitat located just off County Road W63 in the southwestern corner of the county, not far from the Linn County line. Largely rehabilitated prairie, but bordered by scrub timber and Buffalo Creek, this is a very good spot to search for resident and migrant sparrows. It is Delaware County's most reliable location for almost certainly breeding Sedge Wrens. It's the only place in the county where I've found Northern Bobwhite.

Using Highways U.S. 20 and IA 13 as boundaries, driving open country roads in the southwestern quadrant in winter will usually produce Rough-legged Hawk and Lapland Longspur, with an occasional Snow Bunting or Meadowlark (presumably Western).

Any birding expedition requires fuel, of course. Manchester is really one's only option for food, and national fast-food chains and a couple of locally owned bistros are here. There are some convenience stores scattered about the county, too. Curiously, I've not encountered Eurasian Collared-Doves at any of them, but they can be found in the small town of Earlville, just off Highway 20.

Exploring Iowa's less frequently birded counties can be a lot of fun and I highly recommend it. More important, though, is the contribution each of us can make to the expansion of our knowledge of bird distribution in our state. It is, after all, Breeding Bird Atlas time.

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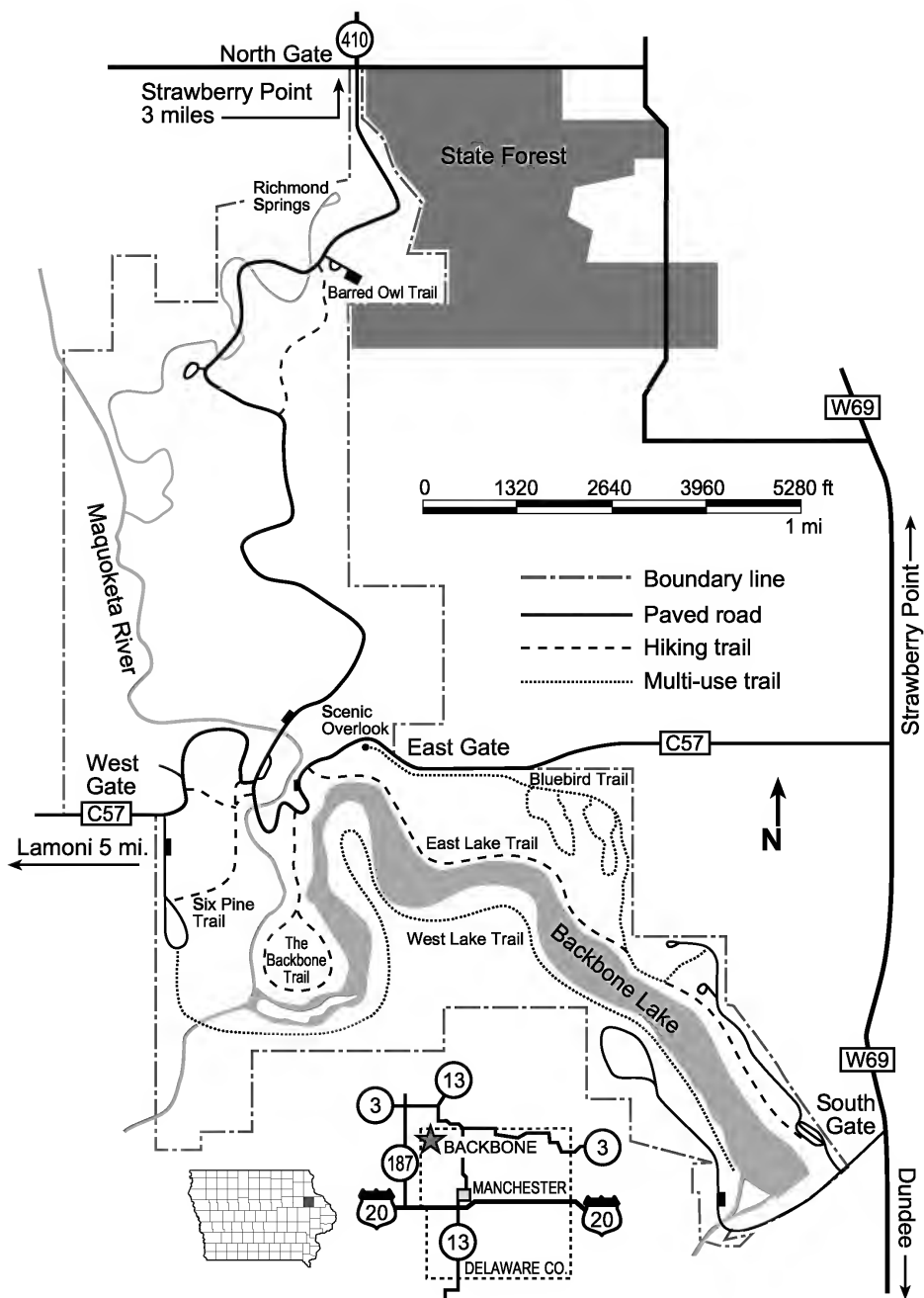


Figure 2. Backbone State Park.

# **Fifty Years Ago in *Iowa Bird Life***

*James J. Dinsmore*

The lead article in the September 1958 issue of *Iowa Bird Life* provided details on the habits of a pair of Prothonotary Warblers nesting northwest of Iowa City. The authors, Fred Kent and Robert Vane, illustrated their article with several great photos of the birds, their nest site, and the surrounding habitat.

In another article, Earnest Steffen described his views against a proposed hunting season for Mourning Doves in Iowa. William Youngworth, a frequent contributor to the journal, had two articles outlining changes in the distribution of two northwestern Iowa species. In one, he described how the Burrowing Owl had gradually disappeared from several places where it formerly nested, and in the other he outlined how the Blue Grosbeak had expanded its range in the past 25 years. A short article by Beth Proescholdt described her experiences with several of Iowa's migrant thrushes.

The reviews featured a recent book by renowned field biologist, Paul Errington. The book, *Of Men and Marshes*, described his experiences in wetlands in Iowa and elsewhere, and was reprinted a few years ago.

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**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES** (renewable yearly): Fledgling (students) \$15, Institutional \$20, Goldfinch \$20, Bluebird \$35, Oriole \$50, Egret \$75, Osprey \$100, Bald Eagle \$250, and Peregrine Falcon \$500+. Membership dues entitle members to receive *Iowa Bird Life* and *IOU News* quarterly and to vote and hold office in the Union. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Join, give a gift, or manage your membership on-line at <[www.iowabirds.org](http://www.iowabirds.org)>. Paper forms for new members and renewals may be mailed to the treasurer (see inside front cover). Back issues of *Iowa Bird Life* are available from Membership Coordinator Pam Allen, 7955 Wistful Vista Dr., #20, West Des Moines, IA 50266 (2birders@hickorytech.net).

**INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS:** Original manuscripts, notes, letters (indicate if for publication), editorials, and other material relating to birds in Iowa should be sent by e-mail attachment in Microsoft Word to editor. Research manuscripts should include abstract, introduction, study area, methods, results, discussion, and literature cited sections and will be sent for peer review. Accepted manuscripts will be published promptly depending on space available.

**Photos and graphics:** Submit only original, unsized, and unenhanced photos in your camera's JPEG (\*.jpg) format. Photos must be 300 dpi at the size they will be printed (6-1/2" wide by 6-1/2" high for the cover and various smaller sizes inside), so setting your camera to its highest possible resolution is recommended. The editor will do any resizing and enhancing required because any previous adjustments to the photos may make them unusable. Submit photos and graphics as e-mail attachments.

E-mail all material other than seasonal reports to editor at Kay@KayNiyo.com. Deadlines for submission are **January 1** for winter issue (Vol. xx[1]), **April 1** for spring issue [2], **July 1** for summer issue [3], **October 1** for fall issue [4]. Send seasonal field reports to field reports editors by deadlines listed on inside front cover.

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**UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION:** Fall 2008: 12–14 September 2008, Iowa Falls

**FRONT COVER PHOTO:** Summer Tanager, first-year male, Lake MacBride State Park, *Johnson*, 3 May 2008. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.

**BACK COVER PHOTO:** Scott's Oriole, first state record, Estherville, *Emmet*, 13 April 2008. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

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